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HOLDING BRITAIN TO RANSOM

The people of Britain are waking to the fact that the need for houses in 1944 is as immediate and desperate as the need for aircraft was in 1940, and that without similar heroic methods they will not get enough of them in time. In charge of housing we need a resolute Minister endowed with power to override the present tangle of conflicting authorities—Urban and Rural Councils, Ministries of Health, Town and Country Planning, Reconstruction and Works. Only a single Department of State invested with plenary powers to plan and execute can do the job. Further, measures must be at once adopted to prevent housing projects being obstructed or rendered intolerably costly by the vested interests of private owners of land. And this means, as Mr. Attlee said in a speech last Sunday, the complete public control of all land. Failing this clean-cut solution, it will be ultimately impossible to defeat the present wholesale racketeering in real estate; it will be impossible to control in the public interest the use of land; it will be impossible to rebuild worthily the cities devastated by bomb and slum; and it will be impossible to build houses which can be let at true, economic rents (*i.e.* without the clumsy contrivance of subsidies) within the capacity of average workers' wages. In short, the housing crisis—and no weaker word is adequate—will not be overcome without a radical change in the structure of economic power.

This is well understood by the Tories, who have now shown that they are determined to give battle on the foremost positions of the landlords' defence system. It was very real Tory pressure which produced a Cabinet deadlock last Friday and brought the Prime Minister hurriedly to the House with the message that, even in the very restricted sphere of the Town and Country Planning Bill, there is now disagreement about the proper basis on which to compensate owners of property compulsorily acquired in blitzed or blighted areas. Here is involved only a fraction of the sites which must be acquired for the complete execution of adequate housing and rebuilding programmes; and we recall with what unction Mr. Churchill took credit in his broadcast last March for the decision "that *all* land needed for public purposes shall be taken at prices based on the standards of values of March 31, 1939." But, even in the limited terms of blitzed or blighted areas, the first practical application of this principle is too much for the men of property who dominate the Prime Minister's majority. While a shadowy succession of Coalition spokesmen, from Lord Reith to Lord Woolton, have prated of planning and proper development of land, the old landlords have quietly mobilised their solid forces and noted with satisfaction how their ranks have been daily strengthened by the "new" landlords—the speculative investors who have been buying up agricultural land, blitzed sites, houses, shops and office buildings indiscriminately, on a gigantic scale. The result is that the "replacement" values of compulsorily acquired land and buildings—the 1945 values—are grossly inflated. These are the profits which the landlords now demand from the Cabinet the right to realise—these and, in due course, all future increments accruing from development.

What is to be the Labour Ministers' attitude to this attempt to hold Britain to ransom? Already they have made large and questionably wise concessions. They acquiesced when the 1939 "ceiling" for compensation was quietly converted into the 1939 "standard," although they must have known that land-racketeers in 1940–41 bought up countless sites at prices far below those of 1939. They agreed, in the present Bill, to compensation at "replacement" values for small owner-occupiers, though they must have been aware that barely 15 per cent. of citizens own (even nominally; for most of this fraction are mortgaged to the hilt) the houses they occupy, and they must have realised that this concession would simply open the door for stronger sectional pressure-groups. Yet, though they compromised to this extent the principle that war profits should not fall into the lap of landowners, while men conscripted to fight lost their civilian means of livelihood, the Labour Ministers have not yet surrendered outright to the men of property on this basic issue. They have still time to retrieve lost ground.

That they will be tempted and blackmailed we do not doubt. They will be promised more extensive Housing Acts and Acts to implement Social Security if they will make "just one more concession" to preserve the Coalition. They will face threats from the Prime Minister that, if they make Cabinet unity impossible, he will have a "snap" election in which Labour will be denounced for dividing the country while the enemy still holds the Rhine, and in which the real issues of land values extortion will be confused by specious Tory championing of justice for the little man. Nevertheless, in our view, a point has been reached at which it would be fatal to make further concessions whose effect would be to entrench vested interests in land or to give sanction to unearned profits accruing to landlords from war conditions.

Given a Tory majority in Parliament, "land needed for public purposes," in which housing has now immediate priority, will never be acquired on tolerable terms or on an adequate scale. To-day the obstruction is a demand for compensation on terms which must mean excessive rentals; to-morrow it will be a refusal to allow this or that form of land-ownership to suffer interference. The task for Labour is to fight for the one solution—complete public control of all land—which makes sense. The fatal course is acquiescence in a land policy whose consequences will be failure to meet housing demands. No post-war Government will live which is responsible for that failure.

The Red Danube

War news swings again eastward. While the Allies in the West, still without access to Antwerp, slowly complete their build-up for a renewed offensive, the Russians have struck with decisive force from the Lithuanian uplands to Memel, shattering the remains of the Northern Group of German armies and thus tightening the encirclement of East Prussia. Still more important strategically, however, is the fresh impetus which they have given to their invasion of Hungary. The line of the Tisza has been forced, and communications between Budapest and the Carpathians *via* Debreczen severed. With a

wedge thus driven into the heart of the Hungarian plain, the position of Admiral Horthy's dispersed forces is desperate. The investment of Budapest is likely within a matter of days, and the only obvious course for the Hungarian Government is to follow the Rumanian example and change sides without more ado. They will clearly have to abandon all claims to retain their 1940 frontiers; and we do not know what attitude Moscow will ultimately adopt towards the land-owning Magyar aristocracy. From the angle, however, of immediate military expediency, the increment of a score of Hungarian divisions would doubtless serve well the plans which Marshal Malinovsky is executing. These are clearly to secure the Danube valley as far as Vienna, and thence to form the southern arm of a pincer movement directed against Silesia. The Germans could scarcely neglect such a fatal threat, but, unless they abandoned the Rhine, they could not meet it without weakening their centre on the Vistula.

Balkan Problems

As it advances up the Danube, the Red Army leaves behind it in the Balkans knotty problems centred particularly in Macedonia and Western Thrace, and in the divergence between the attitudes of the Russian and British Governments towards Bulgaria. Mr. Churchill has roundly declared that he does not wish to have Bulgaria as an ally; and no armistice terms have yet been agreed between Moscow, London and Washington for presentation to Sofia. Meanwhile developments have occurred which fit ill with the Churchillian standpoint. The Bulgarian army has been placed under the operational direction of the Russian High Command; the Bulgarian Government has declared itself to be a "co-belligerent"; Marshal Tito, after a visit to Marshal Stalin, has signed a pact of "brotherly amity" with the Bulgarians aiming at a friendly solution of all common problems; and several Bulgarian divisions remain in Western Thrace, their commanders (presumably with Russian approval) having made an agreement with the local E.L.A.S. leaders. M. Papandreou's Government should soon arrive at Athens. It may, however, be a long time before M. Papandreou's writ runs in Macedonia and Thrace; and it is greatly to be hoped that Mr. Churchill and Marshal Stalin can agree on common policy in relation to those areas. There is no reason to believe that the U.S.S.R. intends to depart from its policy of non-interference in Greece, and it has been agreed in Moscow that the Bulgarian troops shall leave Thrace in 15 days; but Russian opinion would undoubtedly look askance at British attempts to counter Slav *rapprochements* in Macedonia, and the retention by a friendly Bulgaria of access to the Aegean might well seem economically desirable to Moscow. The wisest course for Britain is to let negotiations between Greece, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria proceed without interference. Greece needs food much more than British bayonets.

A Gloomy Double-tenth

Presumably Mr. Churchill was over-tired or out of temper when he made the astonishing statement that the help sent by Britain and America to China was "lavish," and that "the reverses of the Chinese armies, which had been fighting since 1937, were most disappointing and vexatious." The Chungking press has naturally gone up in the air. The spokesman for the Chinese National Military Council has summarised the facts by remarking that the "actual tonnage of armament supplies afforded to the Chinese armies in China from Pearl Harbour to the present would not be sufficient to sustain a single British or American army division in combat for a week." This is no more than the truth, and Mr. Churchill should apologise, explaining that what he meant was that, since the Japanese conquest of South-East Asia in 1942 cut off China from all communication except by air across the Himalayas, it was really remarkable that we had succeeded in sending even the wretchedly inadequate amount that has in fact reached Chungking. That would have been true, and the Chinese would not have resented it. As it is, in the thirty-three years that have, this week, elapsed since its foundation, the Chinese Republic has celebrated no "double-tenth" (tenth day of the tenth month) so gloomy as that of 1944. The Japanese advance—from Changsha along the railway to Laipin, with a converging thrust from Canton up the West River—threatens to cut off the rich Maritime Provinces completely from Chungking, and to deprive the U.S. bomber force of its bases. To the Chinese it is only a partial consolation that the Japanese forces outside China are suffering severely at the hands of the Americans. The economic and social conditions within China are even more daunting than the Japanese. The one hopeful sign is that as the military danger grows there is a chance, as there was in the early days of the Chinese war, that the Government, which is becoming increasingly reactionary and restrictive, will be compelled to rely more on popular forces.

Are We Tied to America?

Sir John Anderson upset a good many people by the passage in his Mansion House speech last week in which he referred to this country's international obligation to refrain from practices of trade discrimination after the war. Some people understood these references as applying to the decisions taken at Bretton Woods, whereas they were based in fact on our Mutual Aid Agreement with the United States and on the Anglo-American commercial agreement of 1938. They bind us for as long as, and only for as long as these particular agreements remain in force; and, even within those limits, what they bind us to is not very clear. Sir John spoke as if we were committed not to enter into barter arrangements with other countries; but the Americans, while professedly following a policy of "no discrimination" in foreign trade, have in fact made larger barter transactions than any other country. "No discrimination" does undoubtedly mean that we are not free to make, except in the reserved case of imperial preference, discriminating *tariff* arrangements, but we cannot accept Sir John Anderson's word for it that it also rules out such transactions as bulk purchase through import boards or barter of goods for goods. There need be no element of discrimination to which the Americans would have any right to object in arrangements of these types; and it is essential, whatever Sir John Anderson's personal prejudices may be, that we should keep our hands free to enter into them. Nor is there anything in the Bretton Woods decisions that should stand in the way of this, unless there have been secret agreements or understandings which have been concealed from the British public.

Labour and Common Wealth

Common Wealth has now formally approached the Labour Party with a request for affiliation on terms. What the proposed terms are we do not know; but obviously terms there must be, if anything is to come of the approach. Common Wealth, which has steadily refrained from fighting against Labour candidates, cannot be expected simply to become an affiliated society in the Labour Party and then to take its chance of getting some of its candidates chosen, as against those of other societies, at Labour selection conferences. There must be some initial arrangement in areas in which Common Wealth has either sitting M.P.s or adopted candidates, and there is no Labour candidate in the field. When this immediate issue has been dealt with, Common Wealth will no doubt be prepared to accept the ordinary status of an affiliated society, and to take its chance with the rest; but that is for the future. The immediate question is whether the Labour Party Executive, which has just announced its intention of going to the polls as an entirely independent party, will be wise enough and flexible enough in mind to recognise the big advantage of carrying Common Wealth with it in many of the dormitory areas in which the strength of Common Wealth lies and the Labour Party stands little chance of victory if it fights alone.

Britain's War Factories

Although the Government plan for the disposal of factories it has built and owned during the war rejects the wholly unsatisfactory precedent of 1918, when plants were sold off indiscriminately, it is based just as firmly upon the intention to give the maximum possible satisfaction to private enterprise. This time the factories are to be leased to those firms which can put up a case on grounds of efficiency, type of product, geographical position and loss suffered through enemy action or industrial concentration schemes. Given a comprehensive plan—but where is it?—for location of industry, this would be a reasonably satisfactory method. As things are, it means chiefly that there is to be no State enterprise outside the munitions industry. Though the ownership of the plants is to remain in the hands of the State, they will be effectively controlled by the firms lucky enough to secure the leases; and these, be it noted, are long. Is State production, even of urgent civilian requirements like housing components, not contemplated? For example, surely the emergency demands that before any transfers of war plants to private enterprise are made, the Government should review the demand for mass-produced houses and furniture. This can best be satisfied by such plants.

PARLIAMENT: Land Block

Wednesday, noon

It is platitudinous now to say that the Coalition is "breaking up," or that such-and-such a crisis is "the beginning of the end"; but the parties may well muddle on in their uneasy cohabitation for several months more. In the attempts now being made behind the scenes to render the Town and Country Planning Bill's compensation clauses more palatable to land speculators, everybody but the speculators' spokesmen would seem to be behaving in a most conciliatory way. Labour has already made it clear publicly that concessions will be agreed to, albeit reluctantly, simply that the Bill may be made to work as quickly as possible; while nobody expects anything but appeasement from the charming but spineless Minister concerned. Even so, Attlee could not do more, on Monday, than say that it was "hoped" to reach agreement this week, but that it was "by no means a simple matter."

The Government must have thought it a most convenient chance that Clause 45 should be reached on a Friday afternoon, when the absence of most of the Labour Members (including perhaps some of the "Awkward Squad") may usually be counted on. No warning was given through the usual channels of the Prime Minister's intervention, which took all but a picked handful of Members by surprise—though, as the hour for his arrival drew near, it was observed that W. S. Morrison was, so to speak, vamping till ready with an eye on the clock and some fanciful digressions on the beauty of the English landscape. The Prime Minister was at his blandest, securing initial laughs by apologising for his intrusion and by varying one of his own dicta to "At present we must keep our pugnacity for export purposes." Members felt that this reminder might have been addressed to the land interests whose wrecking threats had forced him to this action. At any rate, neither Aneurin Bevan nor George Buchanan was deterred from pugnacity—Bevan arguing impromptu, with considerable skill, the issues of procedure involved, Buchanan calling the whole episode "shocking" and "a contemptible business."

Hore-Belisha (as Gallacher said, "assiduously working his passage home") told a heartrending tale of the widows and small shopkeepers who

ere, Members were apparently expected to sume, the powerful interests responsible for the overnment's emasculation of the Bill. This was, any case, irrelevant, since it was known that o one would oppose modifications of the clauses signed to restore such individuals to the same nd of property that they had been deprived of. bviously, the land itself was the crux.

By dint of some uproar and some well-timed bstruction as 5 o'clock drew near, Members revented the Chairman from putting Clauses 6 and 47—which, accordingly, afforded the pportunity for a similar scene on Monday, hen a Tory said that prolonged discussion ould "cause a most unfortunate impression utside"; nobody asked him whose fault that as, or who started it all. Aneurin Bevan said at when Tories were "defending their bank-alances," they reduced Parliament to a farce to save their swag and their friends' swag."

On Tuesday there was one of the classic ebates on Proportional Representation. After competent reiteration of the familiar arguments n both sides—which included sincere and inter-sting speeches by T. E. Harvey and Megan loyd George—the House went to division: or P.R., 18; against, 202. This discussion was on the Redistribution of Seats Bill; in introducing this Herbert Morrison delivered a glowing encomium of the City of London, which is still to return two Members, though its resident population is only 6,000 and its total electorate (including business men's wives) 38,000, as against the quota for *one* Member of some 53,000. Sir George Broadbridge also eulogised the City, which, he said, had "always championed the cause of freedom and liberty." Moreover, "It may not be generally known that the City of London is the issuing house for all big Government loans, and also for the Dominions." Mr. Pritt: "And for every fraudulent company that is floated." Another Member disclosed that Sir George, who spoke at some length, was a Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Lorimers; it was felt that he might with advantage have worn one of the company's own bits.

At question-time Dick Law, deputising for the absent Eden, came as near winking as so stately and sonorous a young gent could when he told Boothby to draw his own deductions about the unsatisfactory state of our present diplomatic position in Paris.

PONTIFEX MINOR

WORLD ORGANISATION

THE world leadership of Woodrow Wilson and he noble aspirations of the Covenant of the eague of Nations came to nothing in the end ecause the Powers remained squabbling, grabbing nd self-regarding units incapable, when it came o any test, of co-operative action. This time the fficials at Dumbarton Oaks have moved to the pposite extreme. Fearing, perhaps, that any oble phrase or decent aspiration would be reeted with no more than a cynical curl of the ip by the men who kill and die on a hundred attlefields, they have been content to produce purely administrative document, containing no emorable phrase or hint of political philosophy. The essential, they would argue, is not the per-ection of the machinery, but the will to work ny international machinery. So in lumbering anguage, they have devised something that ooks as if it might stand a few practical tests, without, at the outset, provoking a reaction in the United States, where the issues just before a Presidential election are dynamite, or offending the Soviet Union which, with the war still to win and delicate issues of frontiers still under dispute, continues to be highly suspicious and slow to commit itself.

This document must therefore be considered in its political setting, and the main political issue is the necessity of better co-operation between Russia and the West. If that is created the rest may be added unto us. A great step forward was taken at Teheran. Since then, though military co-ordination has become a reality, with the result that the *Wehrmacht* looks like being finally defeated this winter, fresh political differences have grown up in the Balkans, the traditional centre of intrigue between Russia, Germany and the West, and in Poland, the most dangerous source of division between Russia and her allies. Nor is there yet clear agreement about other important problems, including Allied policy in Germany and Russia's attitude to the war in the Far East. Moreover, in the economic sphere, Russia's recent request for North Persian oil concessions raises an issue which, failing good understanding, might cause difficulties. Clearly, there is plenty to discuss with Stalin, and in taking air passage once again to Moscow Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden have adopted the course that is most likely to end the war quickly and to bring a peace that is not still-born.

Detailed discussion of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals will last over many months. But the measure of agreement is already considerable. The new organisation inherits from the League of Nations a Council of Permanent Great Powers with seats to be filled by election from a General Assembly in which all member States are to be represented. An International Court of Justice and a plan to settle disputes by conciliation and arbitration, with the threat of economic sanctions backed by the ultimate use of armed force in the background—these are all features of the Covenant. The differences, however, are as striking as the similarities. The Council, which is to have an organisation in permanent session and not, in theory at least, to wait for an emergency (when it is probably too late), is to have at its disposal a special allocation of air strength which can be used speedily if the Council see the necessity. A military staff, which is presumably intended to be an extension, to include Russia, of the present Combined Staff at Washington, will be permanently retained to work out detailed plans and "regional arrangements." By this device, the problem of combining the fact of the United States' domination of the American continent, British supremacy in many parts of the world, and Russian control of areas extending beyond her former boundaries, is reconciled with the necessity of a central organisation in which the Powers promise to pool their armed force. Finally, amongst the central features of the scheme are some very shadowy economic proposals, which have at least the merit of recognising that the various "international agencies," which must be set up to deal with economic problems that extend far beyond national frontiers, must be responsible to a central authority.

What does all this amount to? It accepts, as the central fact of the post-war situation, that power will be largely concentrated in the hands of a few great States. It envisages that America, Britain and Russia will all wish to reduce their armaments and to reach agreement in doing so after the war. But it does not pretend that America, Russia or Britain can be induced to divest themselves of their supreme power. If that is realism,—if the Great Powers will not submit themselves to any law above them—then no genuine federation, confederation or World State is possible. The essence of any such international authority is that it would have at its disposal, to enforce recognised rules of international law, a body of force greater than that which could be put into the field by any single Power or combination of Powers. If the law-making authority is not more powerful than individual States, then we are condemned for the time being to a form of Holy Alliance, whose existence depends on continued agreement between the main Allies. This fact is made obvious to everyone by the failure to reach agreement at Dumbarton Oaks about voting on the Security Council. If each of the great Powers maintains a veto on the use of force in the case of aggression, then no world authority is created. And since that is the reality, it is perhaps as well that no verbal camouflage has been used to cover the fact that neither America, Russia or Britain would accept a vote to decide whether they were aggressors within their own sphere of interest. If Russia, Britain or America were to be held as an aggressor by the other two, then the organisation is necessarily at an end and any effort to coerce the aggressor means in effect a Third World War. In short, as long as the three great Powers maintain their present distribution of force, the veto inevitably exists in practice if not in form—and the issue is whether in the case of one of the great Powers acting in a way which the others hold to be aggressive, the new organisation will make a positive *obligation* on the other Powers to go to war with it, or whether the organisation would in that case collapse, leaving it to the judgment of each national member State whether or not to attempt to coerce an aggressor.

There are two, and only two theoretical ways of maintaining world peace. The first is by the concentration of power in a single State. The *Pax Romana* meant that no wars (except punitive expeditions organised by Rome) would be permitted. The same idea has occurred to modern States, and we are fighting Germany at the moment to prevent a *Pax Germanica*. The idea that the modern world can be dominated by a single Power is to-day no more than an excuse for large-scale aggression, since innumerable countries will fight to the death rather than accept foreign domination, and the distribution of power is such that the only result of the attempt at world conquest is the devastation of continents and the final destruction of the country which launches the war.

The second method, which in a variety of forms has been advocated by thinkers from the Abbé de St. Pierre to Karl Marx and Woodrow Wilson, is an international government which might be a super-State or Federation in which individual States, as in the United States of America, have surrendered their sovereignty in matters of foreign policy. Though the League of Nations was no super-State or Federation, it was hailed by its champions as the best approximation to a super-national organisation which could be obtained in 1919. All the Powers maintained their nominal sovereignty, with the result that, when disputes arose, action was taken or neglected, not in accordance with the principles laid down, but in accordance with the view that the great Powers held of their own interests. While pretending to co-operate at Geneva the sovereign Powers, in fact, competed economically, and only showed signs of being about to unite when they were afraid of Bolshevism. To the Marxist this was all a foregone conclusion. He holds, and perhaps rightly, that no secure international system is possible except on the basis of a world Socialist organisation. But to-day the Marxist, especially if he lives in Russia, is like the rest of us in not being able to face the prospect of an endless series of revolutions and world wars which may theoretically lead to an ultimate Socialism in which the Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World may become possible. Russians, British, Americans, Chinese, French, the peoples of all the nations all over the world, want peace, and know that a third war is less likely to lead to a world federation than to anarchy and to the physical and moral destruction of the bases of our joint civilisation.

In examining the proposals that come from Dumbarton Oaks, we must consider not so much their theoretical deficiencies as the political situation of which they are the recognition. We shall be able to judge better the question of what can be made of this new essay in world organisation when we know how far Mr. Churchill is able to reach agreement on the practical issues of today in his talks with Marshal Stalin in Moscow.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE FUTURE

At next week's Trades Union Congress the industrial wing of the British Labour Movement will be debating the place which it hopes and expects to take in the affairs of post-war Britain. The tone for these debates has been set by the reports already issued to the delegates by the General Council; and it is interesting to compare it with the tone of the corresponding discussion which went on during the closing stages of the last World War. Some things which ranked high then among the demands of the Union can now be taken for granted. Social insurance, for example, has made enormous strides since 1918; and so has education. The necessity of a large-scale public housing policy is now generally recognised, though it is still in dispute how far such a policy should go, and what form it shall take. The right of collective bargaining about wages and conditions is now accepted in a much wider field than in 1918, when there were still important groups of employers standing out against Trade Union recognition. Indeed, the place of Trade Unionism in the life of society is nowadays taken for granted to an immensely greater extent than it was at the end of the last war, when Labour held quite a minor place in Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition, and the Labour Party was still only a small factor in the day-to-day life of the House of Commons.

In all these, and a number of other respects, the Trade Unions can take for granted what they were only claiming in 1918. But these gains have been bought at a price—at any rate in terms of the aspiration which appeared to be stirring the Trade Union world a generation ago. Trade Unionism has been, during the period between the wars, to a considerable extent absorbed, not only into the life of the State, but also—what is perhaps even more significant—into the life of capitalist enterprise. Employers have learnt that to grant recognition and to consult with Trade Union leaders about questions of industrial policy which they used to guard jealously as their own preserves is not to surrender power or leadership, but may carry with it the advantage of enrolling Trade Unionism as an auxiliary agency of capitalist discipline. They have learnt, too, to speak on occasion to Trade Union leaders in the language of industrial solidarity against the "politicians," and to develop a sort of economic *camaraderie* of producers which often sounds curiously like a common attitude of vested interest against the consumers' demand for cheapness and plenty.

Against this background of inter-war development, the T.U.C. General Council now sets forth its post-war programme in a mood of sober realism, with none of the excursions towards Utopia which characterised Labour claims a generation ago. The long-run objectives are still "socialistic"; and in immediate policy the General Council is asking for some public ownership and for a considerable increase of State intervention in industry, including the maintenance of many of the wartime "controls" and the institution of a good many new forms of control as well. But, though the aims are "socialistic," the objective, as far as it is at all clearly defined, is not Socialism, but a form of State-controlled enterprise still dependent largely on the profit-motive, but aiming at the regulation of profit-making in the public interest and at supplementing the profit-motive by other means in order to ensure "full employment," or, in other words, the full use of the nation's resources of man-power and other productive assets. When public ownership is proposed, it now takes the form of the Public Corporation, with some representation of labour in its councils; and when control, rather than ownership, is at issue, the Trade Union demand is now for "Industrial Boards," representing equally employers and workers, but containing also representatives of the public, and acting under chairmen responsible to, and appointed by, the State.

At the apex of the proposed new organisation of privately owned industry, the General Council now wants "a national industrial council . . . representative of all parties to industry and economic life." What this phrase means, or what possibly the powers and functions of the proposed council are to be, we are nowhere explicitly told: nor is there any working out of the relation of such a body to the substantial publicly owned section of industry contemplated in the General Council's report. Indeed, the national industrial council, which has been hovering about in the background of economic discussion ever since the Liberal Government got worried about industrial unrest in 1910, does not really fit in at all to the general structure which the General Council seems to have in mind. The starting point for the T.U.C.'s post-war plan is the need to achieve full employment. This, in the view of the draftsmen, involves public ownership of certain key industries, among which coal and transport take pride of place. It includes planned control of investment and of banking and credit policy; and it also involves such regulation of the working of the main privately owned industries as will cause the combines and great firms which dominate them to work expansively instead of restrictively, to follow actively progressive policies based on research and the pursuit of cheapness and abundance—in short, to behave in the very opposite way to that which has been characteristic of them between the wars. To achieve this remarkable change evidently requires strong direction of industrial policy in consumers' interests. It is not easy to see how it can be furthered by interposing between the "gamut" of the separate industries and the planning organs of the State a national industrial council which is presumably intended to rest mainly, though not exclusively, on representation of the producing interests.

In effect, the proposed national industrial council seems to emerge from one stratum of Trade Union thought, representing a continuation of the tendency towards an accommodation with capitalism which was on top during the difficult years following the defeat of the General Strike of 1926—the "Mond-Turner" period; whereas the rest of the report, starting out from the concept of "full employment," stands for the Trade Union response to the newer ideas of State-controlled capitalism which owe most to Lord Keynes and Sir William Beveridge, in their several spheres. Both are "moderate" policies, in the sense that neither issues a direct challenge to the capitalist order; but they point in different directions—the one towards a greatly extended "collectivism" with the Socialism largely left out, and the other towards a notion of industrial self-government recognising the partnership of the employer—not Guild Socialism, but Guildism with the Socialism wholly omitted. The Trade Union leaders are probably for the most part quite unconscious of the dualism in their own minds, and are able to be unconscious of it because both policies are moderate and involve the discarding of revolutionary objectives and at least an indefinite postponement of the fundamental class issues. In the present report, the collective tendency seems to have much the upper hand of its rival: so that the proposal of a national industrial council appears on the whole an inconsistency.

With the working out of post-war economic policy in its wider aspects, the General Council combines, in a second report, good advice to the Trade Unions about their own methods of organisation. Rejecting as impracticable any compulsory amalgamation of Trade Unions into more logical groupings, the General Council advocates as much amalgamation as can be voluntarily achieved, *plus* much closer federation on industrial lines and a closer linking up of the industrial federations with the General Council itself. It also urges the need for greatly extended provision for research and policy building, both in the separate Unions and in the movement as a whole, and stresses the necessity of adapting Trade Union methods and policies to changing industrial techniques, which are altering the relative importance of old crafts and industries, breaking down old lines of demarcation, creating new industries and processes, and rendering many traditional Trade Union practices restrictive and obsolete.

These questions are, of course, closely connected with the practical problems which will arise in the working out of any policy based on "full employment." Such a policy must ensure both for greater transferability of labour from job to job and from trade to trade, and also for a new kind of industrial morale. If "full employment" does really remove the fear of the sack there will have to be other ways of keeping the ordinary workman up to the scratch; and the Trade Unions, as the chief workers' authority, will have to play their part in working out their own incentives.

On these points the General Council make reassuring, though non-committal, noises. The reluctance to enter into future commitments is natural; for there is still no guarantee that post-war Governments will in fact follow "full-employment" policies. The present Government's White Paper falls far short of such a promise; and until there are much more definite guarantees the Trade Unions very naturally decline to abandon cherished Union practises or policies.

The Trade Unions—and indeed all sections of the Labour Movement—are not looking for trouble, but rather for a working compromise. The British capitalist class has not, like capitalism over a large part of Europe, ruled itself out of court by open treason in the face of the national enemy. On the contrary, it has on the whole done its best, side by side with the workers, in the war effort, and has not been allowed to make this time the spectacular gains which disfigured its public reputation in the last war. These conditions largely account not only for the General Council's moderation, but also for the absence of any considerable extremist criticism of it. How long this conciliatory atmosphere will survive the end of the actual fighting is very much a moot point.

CROSSING THE FLOOR

(Respectfully dedicated to Rt. Hon. C. Attlee)

"The National Executive desire that when the time comes to dissolve what has been a great partnership, the dissolution should be accomplished with dignity and good feeling." Labour Party National Executive statement, October 7th.

Daybreak and morning light,
And one clear Party cleft!
And may there be no carping at the Right
When I lead out the Left.

The harbour almost gained, the voyage done,
The best of messmates soon must say farewell;
The time cannot be far when for each one
Tolls the division bell.

Beyond the bar the shoals and sandbanks shift,
The crew can scarcely keep the craft afloat—
Bound for uncharted seas I cast adrift,
And seek the vote.

When I alone the ship of State may guide,
Still with one backward look I'll change my place—
No longer with my Captain side by side,
But face to face.

My trusty shipmates I shall keep in mind,
While tacking to the Opposition shore—
And may there be no sniping from behind,
When I have crossed the floor.

SAGITTARIUS

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A LONDON DIARY

WENDELL WILLKIE is a great loss. In spite of a ictionary background and an inherited faith in e virtues of unfettered Big Business, Willkie d two of the rarest attributes: an enquiring d educable mind, and an outlook that was nuinely international. I recall having lunch th him at his New York office in November, 42, soon after his return from his trip to oscow and Chungking. He had advanced azingly since his visit two years earlier to ndon during the blitz. His imagination had en deeply stirred by the spectacle of Russia d China at war, and *One World* showed that otionally and intellectually he was graduating the status of world citizenship. This does not en happen to people with high political hbitions. If he had lived, Willkie might have hieved a great deal. Mr. Roosevelt was right paying high tribute to his courage; it takes eat political courage for a candidate for esidential honours deliberately to buck the rty machine. He wanted to be elected, but he inded more about persuading the American ople to an international outlook, and when he uld not win the hard way, he stood down, d continued the fight outside the purely party ttle.

* * *

I am interested to find that the much discussed estion of Willkie's motives and ambitions found way into the diary of Mr. Grew, the American mbassador in Japan from 1932 to 1942. Grew's *n Years in Japan* (Hammond & Hammond, 15s.), a long book that needs careful consideration. ere I notice him saying as early as June, 1940, at he may be put down as "an original Willkie an." He prefers him for the Presidency to yone else except F.D.R., and he is personally nvinced that Willkie is "honest to the core." do not dispute that judgment. But the puzzle hen one first met Willkie was how anyone who d been a corporation lawyer fighting the battle vested interests with big business tycoons uld really be as naïve as Willkie seemed; he as positively embarrassing in his surprise that ople who have been bombed go on with their bs. And then I asked myself how much of his erpowering charm was to be written off as the ck in trade of the professional politician who ust cultivate an appearance of acute personal terest in the conversation of all the boring ople who insist on talking to him. But the ore I knew of him and listened to him, the more I cided that he was really a big man, in character well as physique. His mind, which was untidy ke his clothes (he seemed always troubled by difficulty in keeping his shirt inside his trousers), as disorderly only because he was trying to hold large number of new and growing ideas in the me box and was gathering his impressions so st that he couldn't get the lid shut. A small cident which was final proof to me of courage d sincerity was that he took the trouble to go fore the Supreme Court at Washington, without fee, to plead the cause of a Californian Comunist, who he thought had not had his rights nder the American Constitution. We could do ith some more Willkies.

* * *

The B.B.C. is coming alive. Perhaps Mr. aley is the new broom that Manchester always id he was. Anyway I notice that the Brains rust was permitted to discuss very lively issues st week and that Priestley's new Monday night ries on the home front is not to Mr. Churchill's xing. (Mr. Churchill never seems to have got er a competitor who was nearly as popular the wireless as he was in 1940.) Also the riday arguments are to be honestly controersial. The technique of wireless argument is ot easy. In the two discussions on the future Germany the method is free discussion on the asis of a very rapid rehearsal, not of words, but ly of the drift of the argument. The difficulty re is that the subject is too big and complex for any of the speakers to feel satisfied that they have got the *balance* right. Each speaker has about seven minutes; he can only effectively say one or two things. The Hogg-Bevan debate was obviously quite spontaneous. Bevan is a natural rhetorician who needs time to develop his argument and display his wit, and I thought that Hogg put over his points at least as well as Aneurin. But his argument that the Coalition should be maintained lest the Peace went wrong and his effort to suggest that the real division was between those who wanted a soft and those who insisted on a tough peace sounded disingenuous. He knows well enough that "hard" and "soft" are irrelevant words; we have the devil of a job to find an effective or workable solution for a conquered Germany. If there is a "soft" school it will come from Catholics and Conservatives who are terrified of Russia, not from the tiny minority of pacifists. The party issue is whether vested interests should be allowed to prevent a new deal on the home front.

* * *

While controversy begins on the Home Service, Sir James Grigg and some of his colleagues remain, it seems, as terrified as ever of anything that encourages men in the Services to think. Tom Driberg, M.P., revealed in last Sunday's *Reynolds* that the project for a Service newspaper on the Continent was now held up because Sir James feared the politics of the nominated editor, Captain Warwick Charlton, who became famous for his progressive conduct of the *Eighth Army News* in the Middle East. Again Pritt showed (on the adjournment of the House of Commons last week) that Aircraftman Abse had been posted to England for no other reason than that he had been "Chancellor of the Exchequer" in the famous Cairo Parliament and had been one of those who protested when the authorities interfered with its freedom of debate. Grigg fights an unworthy and losing battle in these matters. Let him consider the spirit of the last ABCA pamphlet which is an aid to officers in preparing men for demobilisation and the return to civilian life. The men are treated as citizens who serve in a citizen's army, not as the "theirs not-to-reason-why" kind of soldiers whom Grigg, with his Indian experience, seems really to imagine constitute the present army.

* * *

The decision to fix the mark's exchange rate at 40 to the pound is intended, I presume, to form part of Germany's punishment. Whatever its other effects, it will certainly set in motion a series of economic consequences liable ultimately to create grave difficulties for the occupation in Germany. At present the cash wages of workers in Germany average—skilled, about RM. 60, unskilled, RM. 35 a week, the purchasing power parity of the mark being probably about 15, at most, to the pound. It is now proposed that American soldiers in Germany shall have RM. 140 a week to spend, with everything found. Emptied shops, soaring prices—these will be the immediate results. As in every inflationary movement, the big industrialists and distributors will get away with quick profits, but the workers—among whose ranks is our only chance of finding friends in Germany—will be penalised. Finally, as inflation proceeds, economic disturbances of every kind will multiply. And, incidentally, how is this exchange decision viewed by liberated countries to whom Germany owes commercial debts contracted in marks?

* * *

The Eire Censorship has not had a very happy influence on Irish culture since it was started in 1929. Some of the best and most reliable books on Irish history have been banned to Free State readers, as well as periodicals, fiction and scientific books coming from abroad. Anything which offends against the most strict interpretation of the Catholic faith is liable to summary prohibition. Now, I should say, the censors have made themselves a laughing-stock in the best tradition of Irish humour. They have just banned *The Shrine*, written by a Michael Nugent, and published by Dakers. I wonder if they knew when they prohibited its sale on the grounds that the book was "in its general tendency indecent and obscene," that "Michael Nugent" is the pen-name of Count Michael de la Bedoyere, editor of the *Catholic Herald* and former editor of the *Dublin Review*?

* * *

The National Gallery Concerts celebrated an occasion this week when Dame Myra Hess repeated the programme she gave first on October 10, 1939. Five times a week, for five years, these lunch-time concerts have been drawing a new kind of audience for whom chamber music hardly existed before the war. They have introduced a new musical habit as revolutionary in its way as the Proms. No tempering of quality was either feasible or necessary: here was the best from a remarkably wide choice, executed often by the best artists. A glance through the catalogue of works performed and of musicians taking part might even surprise the occasional visitor who preferred to keep his concert-going for the evening. Here is one thing, at any rate, undertaken since the war, which couldn't have been done better. We may not all be willing to give up lunch hours for a Mozart quartet or a Fauré song, but the habit has been implanted. It would be a tragedy if these concerts were to be discontinued after the war. Apart from their other merits, they have introduced a balance and lightness into programme making (most concerts are twice too long) from which we may all, willing or unwilling concert-goers, hope to gain.

* * *

It is related that a certain politician in uniform, who was recently in Italy, was received in audience by the Pope. After the usual exchange of courtesies, conversation flagged and the politician, who is well known for his resource, said: "I wonder, your Holiness, whether you happen to know my friend Evelyn Waugh? He is a Catholic too."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to X.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Miss Irene Ward, M.P., at Gateshead brotherhood yesterday said that what impressed her most on her recent trip was the Cathedral at Valetta, Malta. Of the several chapels within the building, the only ones that had been damaged were Italian and German. This, she thought, was the hand of Providence, and from it we should learn a spiritual lesson.—*Newcastle Journal and North Mail.*

She said that it would be injurious to her health to go to prison; that she had been born and brought up in luxurious surroundings with every comfort and would be unable to stand prison life, and, finally, that she had been born in India and could not bear the cold climate of this country.—*Times.*

A letter home from a young British lieutenant in a Belgian hospital tells how a Nazi officer was "converted." He writes: One German officer next to me came in full of Nazism. On the second day he had a blood transfusion which completely changed his character. After four pints of English blood he was more like a Cockney than a Nazi.—*Evening News.*

The possibility of Torquay becoming a post-war playground for the nation was discussed at a meeting called by Torquay Chamber of Trade yesterday. Among amenities visualised were:

A mammoth indoor pleasure palace; amphibious charabancs; country mansions to be turned into safe dance-halls; airfields; world-wide publicity; speed-boating; and "narrow roads to be preserved and thus keep the district's old-world charm."—*News Chronicle.*

PARIS IN CONVALESCENCE

[From a Correspondent Recently in Paris]

The impending despatch of properly trained political correspondents to Paris, forecast in last week's New Statesman and Nation, is even more necessary than is immediately apparent. The comfortable headquarters of Allied war correspondents is not a suitable place from which to measure the reality of material conditions or to sift the wild rumours that flow in every day. Paris has lived through experiences so fundamentally different from our own that almost all appearances there are deceptive to the visitor returning after five years.

The fighting for the liberation did not do one bomb's worth of damage, and the city under its autumn sunshine seems lovelier even than it was in all our memories. But its population is desperately, even dangerously, hungry, despite a steady improvement in food supplies from the first day of liberation onwards. This underfeeding is not evident to the casual observer, but one becomes painfully conscious of it when one studies the changed appearance of old friends or shares the meagre meals of those who cannot afford the black market. It will show more clearly still in lack of resistance to disease this winter. Gas for an hour a day, electricity for an irregular half-hour or so, cold, unsweetened, black ersatz coffee in the *bistros*, and no transport but the Metro (weekdays only, and very crowded and smelly, with its soapless and hot-water-less clientele)—these are the other main features of everyday life. It should be added that nobody seems to complain. The people of Paris have forgotten their discomforts—the war, too—amid the exhilaration of renewed political life.

The general atmosphere of politics is immensely encouraging. There are a dozen daily papers and more political groups than even in 1939, but the attitude of the rivals to each other is one that we all thought impossible in France. The French have learned tolerance for the first time in their political history. In every political party, from the Communists to what remains of the Right, one finds not merely declarations but real evidence of a determination to hold together at least until economic reconstruction is complete and France has been accepted everywhere as a great Power. Negotiations are in progress for the creation of a political system controlled by three or four major groupings and capable of functioning without incessant Governmental crises. The groups that count are the Communists, the Socialists, the Trade Unions (all three stronger than in 1936), the Catholic Democrats (small but influential) and the *Mouvement de Libération Nationale* (M.L.N.), the only large and viable resistance group. The Trade Unions are seeking, and will get, a dominant position in economic life, and will then probably retire from what they call "political" (meaning electoral) activity. The presence of both Communists and *confédérés* inside the unions makes this inevitable, though it seems to involve the withdrawal from active politics of Albert Gazier, secretary of the C.G.T., and the one new man to make a name in the Consultative Assembly. The M.L.N. will almost certainly seek to fuse with one of the other groups.

The Right is elusive: outside the concentration camps and the tiny minority of frightened Pétainistes still at liberty, it seems to be found, much intermingled with other elements, behind the literary page of the *Figaro*, in the immediate entourage of General de Gaulle and in the small resistance group known as the O.C.M. (*Organisation Civile et Militaire*). It is a Right very much *assagi*; many of its leaders are foremost in the campaign for nationalisation, while the others are hopeful at most of putting a brake on rapid economic change. The Communists are co-operating as loyally as anybody, especially at the top. A little lower down they are often in alliance with the Right, and lower down still (especially in provincial Trade Union branches and local parties) they are fighting hard and sometimes unscrupulously for power. British newspaper stories of local Communist *coups d'état* should be discounted. Where conflict does take place it is for the offices which seem likely to be important during the pre-election period, and there the Communists' most notable victory is their grip on 18 out of the 20 Paris mayoralties. There is, none the less, every reason to believe that, as communications improve and the authority of the central government establishes itself elsewhere, so will the Communist rank and file come once again under the control of its own leaders.

Discussion turns almost exclusively on the problems of *épuration* and nationalisation. Everyone but those who are actually doing the job feels that the purge is proceeding too slowly and timidly, though, in fact, financial and industrial magnates are going at the rate of half a dozen a day into the concentration camps, where they eat their three good but meatless meals a day along with almost all the top ranks of the theatrical profession. In the Civil Service the purge is less showy, but it has already left every Ministry with an acute shortage of staff, and is inevitably slowing down the tackling of the other problem, that of nationalisation.

On this issue, the foreign observer finds much suspicion, but very little real disagreement, outside the Government. The most powerful political body, the National Council of Resistance, which will have the backing of the enlarged Consultative Assembly when it meets, is pressing the Government very hard on problems of economic reform, and is having some visible success every day. The question everyone is asking is why it is necessary to press the Government, and the answer is probably two-fold. The Ministries are overworked and scarcely organised, and old habits of routine persist. However, much has been achieved. Control of the mines of the North, confiscation of war profits, compulsory Joint Factory Committees, Renault and Berliet taken over, and odd achievements here and there like the municipalisation of the Toulouse trams; this is pretty good going.

On the other hand, there is undoubtedly pressure on General de Gaulle from some quarters to go slowly. The General himself seems to be in one of his waiting periods. We know, after four years of experience of him in London, that he acts largely on instinct; he has highly sensitive political antennæ—every Paris politician agrees that he has never failed yet to sense the state of French opinion with uncanny accuracy—and he moves only when he is sure of his following. He has just been touring the provinces and may still be taking their political temperature. If, when he does make up his mind, he moves with the resistance groups and political parties, the combination will be irresistible, and France will bring off an economic revolution even greater than the political revolution of 1789. In the less probable event of his opposing them, they will win the ensuing struggle, because they can exist without him, and he will be nothing without them—but every French interest will suffer from the break. Even if he makes the right decision, he will move quite soon towards a more purely symbolic position. His prestige is enormous, but it is significant that very few people talk about him. The French are grateful for the possibilities of united action he offers, but they are interested, as always, in ideas rather than in men.

They are interested, but not well informed. Most of the economic plans are of about the 1932 vintage. It is in general true to say that throughout the resistance period the Communists took the lead on fighting matters and the Socialists on politics, and the same general division persists. The M.L.N. and O.C.M. have something of a programme, but the rest of the resistance groups have strong feelings rather than a clearly defined policy. The C.G.T., too, knows in general terms what it wants, but is desperately eager for fuller documentation on British wartime experiments and plans. The Socialists are conscious of the opportunities offered to them by the relative planlessness of others, but are anxious not to overexploit them; nobody wants to disturb the honeymoon atmosphere for party purposes.

On foreign affairs the lack of policy is even more marked. The Socialists have published a courageous declaration of their willingness to "hold out their hand in friendship" to the German worker as soon as their rather tough anti-aggression programme has been carried out. They and some M.L.N. leaders affirm their refusal to have anything to do with the annexation of the left bank of the Rhine, while the Catholic Democrats stick to their Collective Security views; but the rest just haven't thought about it. Again, however, there are feelings; there is hatred of Germans, respect for Russian efficiency and for American material achievements. Above all, there is overwhelming, embarrassing, almost frightening and quite general respect, admiration and real affection for this country. Memories of the events of 1940-41 are much fresher in French minds than in ours, and they see us as the real saviours of civilisation. Moreover, they understand land fighting, and they know what happened in the recent battle of France. They want to see more Englishmen, they want a firm alliance with us, and, most of all, they want to know about us. If we let slip this opportunity of creating and cementing a really popularly based Anglo-French understanding, we shall deserve all the inevitable consequences.

MINDS DISEASED

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?

Throughout Europe thousands upon thousands of children are with minds diseased through no fault of their own; and very soon the educators, helped by doctors and psychologists, but dependent mainly on their own insight and wisdom, will have to attempt the cure which Lady Macbeth's doctor declined to undertake. It is a formidable task. Children everywhere will be suffering not only from starvation and its effects but from four or five years of fear and suspicion, and some of them from unspeakable memories of violence. Some will be pitifully old. Others, probably, will have become amoral young toughs—the boys and girls who have taken a lively and even responsible part in guerrilla fighting may now think violence normal, a settled life dull, and pity and sympathy merely weakness. These last may seem less of a problem, but badly handled, they could become the gangsters of the future. Moreover, all these will be in the schools together—possibly adding to each other's troubles in a number of ingenious or unconscious ways.

In some country districts children may not have been very seriously affected; natural resilience, and a protective power to minimise and forget, may have saved many from serious harm. But optimism cannot go very far. We know too much about the widespread starvation, the children fighting each other for food, the bitter winters, with no fuel or warm clothes. We know of the separation from parents, as at Lidice; of the torture and rape of adolescents in Poland and Russia; of the intense suffering and privation in Greece and Yugoslavia. Thousands of children must have witnessed horrors which most adults in this country can hardly imagine. And even where there has been less violence, imponderables must exist—the strain, for instance, which children so easily catch from their elders without understanding it. Everywhere, too, there is the cloud of fear and mistrust. For years now most children in the

occupied countries must have been deliberately taught to trust nobody. In Germany the Nazis set children to spy on their parents and friends, and they have tried the same ugly method elsewhere. Meanwhile, patriot parents must have been insisting on the need for secrecy and caution. A five-year-old who made friends with a German sentry would be scolded at home; a schoolboy would be warned against a friend whose father was "collaborating." In such conditions, suspicion must become a virtue, frankness a dangerous folly. Whether four years' youthful training in this attitude to one's fellow creatures can ever be wholly neutralised remains to be seen. It is a poor start for an era of international peace and co-operation.

Naturally most people here are thinking first of the need to provide food and medical care as soon as the German occupation ends. With the cause of fear removed, and physical health returning, nature and kindness should do much to make the smallest children happy and uninhibited. But for the older ones it may not be so simple. The extreme cases will be for doctors and psychologists; but most of the work must be done in the school, where a maimed generation must be transformed, in a few years, into a potentially useful and happy one.

How is it going to be done? International committees are busy planning the reopening of schools, the provision of equipment and books. There is talk of how to get the universities working properly again, their libraries and laboratories restocked, exchanges arranged. But most of this, necessary though it is, seems only to skirt the central problem. Surely the main questions are how and what the children are to be taught, and by whom? Perhaps many decisions can only be made at home, with the help of teachers who have remained in touch with the children. But the *whole* burden cannot be left for them. In some places only quislings or near-quislings have been allowed to teach, and presumably they will be discredited. In Norway and some other countries, the teachers were the vanguard of resistance and died first. Where valuable people have managed to stay precariously in the schools, they may well be completely exhausted when the war ends. And the closing of so many universities means a dearth of young men and women trained to help them. All this, when a far higher level of skill is needed than in normal times. Much, then, must be done by their compatriots who are now in free countries, and the subject concerns, indirectly, all Europe for the next forty or fifty years.

On the main point, how and what the children are to be taught, isn't there a danger that we may think too politically? The main job may be to get rid of the poison of Nazi propaganda—though I should say that the *first* need would be to make the children's minds supple again—but if we attempt it by counter-propaganda we shall be committing Hitler's sin, subordinating education to narrow political ends, and even in that we shall probably fail. Boosting an opposite set of political and social theories, however admirable, as soon as the Germans have gone, can only increase the child's worry and strain, making its mind a battleground for adult opinions. The all-important thing, surely, is for the children to regain elasticity and balance, to understand what good things the human mind and spirit can do when they are not fettered, to learn that the world is wide and various, and not uniformly horrible—in short, to realise that these last years were nightmare, not normality. Such things they will learn best through happiness. When they enjoy using their hands and brains and sympathy, they will want to understand more; wisdom, fortunately, is infectious, and well-chosen teachers can help them very much; contact with great minds of the past will give them a standard by which to measure contemporary life when, escaped from neurosis, they are able to look at it. Perhaps this seems too obvious to need saying; it is the old high road, of course, trodden by the Athenians and Ascham and Montaigne, and many other sensible people. But so much stress is laid now on technical training and civics that these old truths may be forgotten.

Again, there is a common tendency—especially where Germany has had any influence—to mistake erudition for education, to stress knowledge rather than understanding, position rather than direction. Isn't this rather a dangerous error? If ever real education—the full development of each child's spiritual, mental and physical faculties—was needed, surely it is now? Unfortunately, only those who have had a liberal education know its value; and as long as the majority has had less, most parents, especially in a period of poverty, will go on demanding that their children acquire techniques at school, "learn something *useful*." It should be fairly easy for a good education department or local board to make the fuller need understood; more difficult to remove the economic pressure which lies behind the demand.

This may all seem very generalised and remote; but I think it can be applied practically, at every level. Curricula and syllabuses can be drawn up, equipment planned, books prepared, on the hypothesis that for several years the healing and strengthening of overstrained children is the need—sanity the aim, happiness the means. With the smaller children it will probably be clear enough that play, creative work, delight in music and stories are more immediately important than learning to read or write or add. In the secondary schools, curricula, proportion, method of presentation, may need considerable alteration from what seemed natural before the war. Mathematics and some of the sciences may have, for a time, a therapeutic use besides their intrinsic value; because they are impersonal, a neurotic child may feel protected by them from the sort of reality that has appalled him. Biology may waken too many evil memories, in some districts especially—or may, after a bit, be needed to exorcise them. Another kind of healing can be done through the arts, and here the scope is wide and the principles of selection all-important.

My own impulse would be to concentrate throughout on the sane creative people, the writers, painters, composers, statesmen, whose mastery of life was greatest; to give the children versions of the *Odyssey*, *Don Quixote* and the *Canterbury Tales*, the *Song of Roland* or the *Morte d'Arthur*, in their own language; to take home reproductions of great paintings (to replace portraits of Hitler on the schoolroom walls) and gramophone records of fine music; to present the work of the thinkers and artists as the triumphs of the human spirit, work done for truth and delight. It would seem essential that the young be given only the best in each kind—there is so much of it and time is so short—and that, reading great books in any language, they should concentrate on the author's meaning, not his grammatical peculiarities. Shouldn't history, *at first*, be given as the record of fine people and noble ideas? For some time, the children's minds will need nourishment more than strenuous exercise. Let them learn something of the meaning of thought, beauty and nobility, and you have, incidentally, prepared a soil in which Fascism will not grow.

Specialists may dispute much of this; but these next years are a special problem of a new kind. The rising generation is very much depleted. It has had everything to make it neurotic. In ten, twenty, thirty years the fate of Europe will depend on its sanity and wisdom. Education cannot do all that is needed to produce valuable human beings, but it can do something. And on that, surely, in the remaining school years of these children, all effort should be focused?

HAZEL EARDLEY-WILMOT

EARLY WAKING

"Does a bird rejoice like me
In this earth-fresh dawn?"
"Dearest, on a silvery tree
He achieves an ecstasy,
You, in bed, a yawn."

FRANCES CORNFORD

ENCOUNTER

[The following is a truthful record of an incident in the life of the writer.]

IT happened nineteen years ago, and you will see for yourself why I want to speak about it again in these days.

While our fast train was running through the shadowy plains, all the passengers in my compartment were chatting and I with them. But when it began to climb the slope of the Transylvanian Mountains, black and looming, I could not keep up the small talk. I was afraid of the snows. The railway clerk in Bucharest had warned me that my train might well become snow-bound before we reached the Hungarian frontier. Yet I had to leave the country; it had become very dangerous for me.

There was little room on the seat, and my back felt deadly tired. For nights I had been unable to sleep; I had been listening for the knock at the door, which did not come after all. Now I curled up, tucking my legs into the cramped space of my bit of plush-covered bench, and was pleased when a man opposite asked me whether I was not by any chance a circus artiste with those supple joints. He meant it seriously, and I took it as a great compliment.

Once the train stopped for an endless time somewhere in the snows, and I made myself ready for the shock of being trapped by the Rumanian political police. It was then, I think, that I became aware of the young girl in front of me. She was small, scraggy and sallow, with huge dark eyes set too close to her squat nose, and she was unmistakably Jewish. She, too, stared into the dark snow-drift outside the window, and I met her anguished eyes in the dark mirror of the pane. Then the train started, slowly and laboriously. We looked squarely at each other and began to talk. I had to speak French with her, for I was unable to understand her Yiddish German. She was my own age, twenty-three, and she was going to Paris to study at the Sorbonne, having scraped together the necessary cash by giving French lessons in her small Bessarabian home town. I felt wise and sophisticated in comparison with her: she would starve for no higher purpose than to get a degree in modern languages! Haltingly, she spoke of her linguistic studies. The train was running down the slope, faster and faster, and I felt exhilarated because I had escaped a nauseating danger.

Hours later we crossed the small frontier station. When the Hungarian Customs guard had left the room I blurted out: "Isn't it fantastic that, after Rumania, Hungary seems almost a free country?"

The girl smiled faintly. Then she said:

"You know, when I went for my passport to the office of the Siguaranza"—the Rumanian Security Police—"I had to wait a few hours at the police station. They brought in an old peasant whom I knew by sight. He was something like an elder in a village in the neighbourhood. The Captain cross-examined him. Or, rather, he shouted questions at him about the unrest among the peasants and what he called the Bolshevik conspiracy. The old man was terribly frightened and tried to explain that he and his people were loyal subjects, but that the village was suffering because the soldiers billeted there were taking away all the food, and so on. The Captain grew more and more excited. He said he would find out the truth about the Bolshevik plot at any cost. In the end, the old man trembled so much that he could hardly speak. Then the Captain called in one of the soldiers, that is to say, one of the conscript soldiers garrisoned in our town. I think he was a worker from Transylvania, a miner or a metal worker, I should say. He looked different from our Rumanian soldiers, anyway. The Captain ordered him to flog the old man until he confessed. The soldier stood smartly to attention, and said: 'At your orders, sir, but I can't do it.' The Captain bellowed like a madman, but the soldier just stood there and said: 'No, sir.' I saw that he knew exactly what would

happen to him, and I could not bear the thought. I crept away."

"Did he save the old peasant's life at least, do you think?" I asked.

"Oh no, of course not. They were both flogged to death. I never went back to the police station, though; I wangled my passport somewhere else."

I met the glance of her shining, dark eyes in the sombre mirror of the window-pane. I still remember the outlines of our two faces on the streaky glass, hers small and bony, mine round and childish, and I remember my saying: "But you knew the story and you told it to others, so the soldier did not die altogether." I. B.

TROLLOPE ON THE STAGE

WHO, forty years ago, would have thought it possible? To-day, on the stage of the Lyric Theatre, you can see Mrs. Proudie as large as life; the worldly Archdeacon Grantley as floridly human and peremptory (though perhaps not quite as formidable) as he actually was; dear, vague old Mr. Harding, his father-in-law, who once resigned a sinecure for conscience sake; the humble-proud debt-ridden, easily-perplexed Reverend Josiah Crawley, and his flawlessly loyal family; also, but not quite so clearly that chivalrous and ardent lover, Major Grantley, the Archdeacon's second son (brother-in-law to the Marquis of Hartletop) who resolved to marry Grace Crawley even while she was saying "No," in spite of his father's damned disinheriting countenance and her father's public disgrace.

The prominent characters best acted in this amusing affecting period-piece were Mr. and Mrs. Crawley and Mrs. Proudie (Miss Winifred Oughton). Mr. Felix Aylmer's pinched scholarly precision of utterance and dreary integrity, as the unfortunate perpetual curate of Hoggleston, excited in us precisely the right mixture of respect, sympathy and impatience which the novelist had intended; while his wife's helpless distress and utter devotion were suggested with beautiful discretion by Miss Lindo. Among the small parts Mr. Lathbury as old Harding, and Mr. Piers as the Bishop, could hardly have been better: they were natural, and so, too, were the young lovers.

They avoided all exaggerated intensity. But may I suggest that their kiss is three seconds too long for the period. This tiny point is of some importance if their love-story is to enter intact the minds of a poor benighted modern audience. To avoid intensity is essential in interpreting Trollope, whose art was marked by an animated moderation. In this love-story the dramatic form, however, is at odds with Trollope's method. Inevitably we have not time in the theatre to become, like his readers, gradually and thoroughly acquainted with these lovers. We cannot of course hear Grace Crawley talking about herself and the Major with Mrs. Roberts or Lily Dale. Though, if my memory does not betray me (I know the book so much better I become confused), I do seem to recollect her saying on the stage, in another context of course: "I shall owe him more than love, and I will pay him more than love," and also Miss Hyson speaking those words extremely well. Nor can we, of course, as in the novel, follow the restless persistence of Henry Grantley. The result is their reserve towards each other on the stage cannot reveal fully to the audience the strength of their feelings. The Major remains rather colourless. It is not the actor's fault. Miss Hyson was charmingly unpretentious, and once or twice did manage to suggest for a moment those depths.

Trollope's favourite theme was the point of honour, and well he understood it wherever and however it arose; the point of honour—professional, traditional or spiritual. It suggested most of his plots and nearly all his emotional conflicts. No novelist has treated that theme with more sense and subtlety. He delighted in discovering "the gentleman" among the socially clumsy (Johnny Eames), "the lady" in some poor inching, pinching family. He also enjoyed discovering a cad among aristocrats (Lord De Courcey or Sowerby and Crosbie, both decidedly "swells,") and in marking the differences between a Duke of Omnium (a prodigious swell of course), and such rustic noblemen as De Guest or such perfect gentlemen as "Planty-Pal." The point of honour was ever his test of character. Thus "gentleman" and "lady" recognised each other in his books across social and professional gulfs; though in proportion to their worldliness they might take different views of the width of those gulfs. And in love stories, the attitude of lovers towards the point of honour was Trollope's test of the value of their feelings. It is when he or she perceives that the other can truthfully say, "I could not love thee, dear, so much loved I not honour more," that he or she really falls in love and a good marriage is prognosticated. It may be that one of them fails. Well then the other aches, but will never marry even when obstacles are removed. Lily Dale may long for Crosbie, may forgive him; but, when she could, she would not marry him; because so trivial a man would not, however humbly grateful he might be at first, be able in the long run to help attributing her yielding to his own charm, not to her love. It would be a poor marriage. In the love-story of this play it is because Grace puts the point of honour before her longing for Henry, that she convinces him that she is worth any sacrifice, and also his father that he is wrong to oppose their marriage. This latter point is not brought out clearly enough by the dramatist; the suggestion that the Archdeacon "fell for" her, which the humorous Trollope just glances at, is given undue prominence.

But the love story is not the main theme, which is made out of that thread which traverses *The Last Chronicles of Basset*, and in so far as any novel by Trollope is ever a whole, ties the episodes together. You may recall the scandal created in the diocese by the discovery that the scholarly Mr. Crawley who everybody thought was as exaggeratedly scrupulous as he was desperately poor, was unable or unwilling to explain how he had become possessed of a twenty-pound cheque made out to another person and endorsed, which he had used to pay his butcher who was threatening proceedings. All he could, or would say, was that he had found it among his papers, and had believed it to be his. The mystery is cleared up. Trollope who sympathised so acutely with the point of honour, naturally also excelled in describing shame. Mr. Crawley is a study in honour and shame.

At the beginning of this century it would have seemed extremely rash to predict that there might be again a hungry demand for Trollope's novels, or that his reputation could rise in the estimation of the discriminating. For many years he had held up a mirror in which his contemporaries could recognise themselves as truthfully and pleasantly reflected. He had provided wholesome entertainment for their leisure hours: and he had aimed at that and nothing more. Such readers might again respond to his friendly attitude towards themselves (he never assumed in telling a story to be examining life from a superior level), to his warmth of heart, his robust directness, "his complete appreciation of the usual," which Henry James called his "inestimable merit." But in the eyes of the literary of the nineties and first decade of the twentieth century, such qualities could never ensure survival. He had never envisaged the novel as a "work of art"; nor had he been aware of the "scientific" function of the novelist; a conception like the former also derived from France (Balzac, Zola). No—he was only a prolific entertainer who had over-written himself and had his day. Look at his unpardonable asides which destroyed any illusion of reality! Look at his absurd names. "Quiverful of Puddingdale" for a person with a large family; "Filgrave" or "Renchild" for a doctor, "Chaffanbrass" for a blatant barrister. No, he was no artist!

Why has he not only survived but become admired again and popular? The answer is, I think, that his novels are convincing in spite of these tricks, and that he provides in an age when most novelists have confused moral views, pictures of life judged by standards of which the writer himself is at any rate absolutely sure. He does not only ask questions, but answers them. This is both restful and interesting. It is significant that the Trollope revival began at the end of the first decade after the last war.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

THE MOVIES

"Dragon Seed," at the Empire
New French Films

The proper way to devour your film at the Empire is from the front row. There you lie back gaping at a universe that floods with noise and vision; a creaking door sounds the last trump—but what matter, since the door opens to admit your favourite lovely, with eyebrows two feet long? This is the feast of the four-and-sixpennies, at which I placed myself for the afternoon showing of *Dragon Seed*. Possibly I should have chosen the week before, an all-singing, all-bathing gala in technicolor; but the heart of M.G.M. still beats in *Dragon Seed*. Mrs. Pearl Buck is back in style; the rice fields and the basic English, the prayer-like attitudes, the pyjamas, the babies, are unmistakable. An almond-eyed heroine spends a lot of time looking away from her husband at the camera, and wanting things—can this be Miss Hepburn? Yes, only too obviously it is, and hers is the most Basic English of all. "I want to read a book!"—each monosyllable, quick and separate, drops a tiny bombshell; and later—hours later—she is carrying round a white powder with which to send a whole roomful of officers into convulsions. For the good earth, this time, has something worse than locusts to contend with, in the shape of the bad Japs. Miss Hepburn knows how to deal with them. They all die, and one of them in dying shoots the quisling she has had a go at, unsuccessfully.

As a matter of fact, *Dragon Seed* isn't bad. I am seeing it now, in tranquillity, through the wrong end of the telescope, but close up it thrilled. The rice fields, Walter Huston and Aline MacMahon, the theme of resistance, and an exciting and not too improbable story make for sumptuous drama if for nothing else. It does better by the Chinese than *North Star* did by the Russians. But, without knowing the Chinese except as students or waiters, I profoundly doubt the truth of this picture of peasant life.

The peasants, on the other hand, in *Goupi Mains Rouges*—one of three films made in France during the occupation and shown privately last week—are horribly convincing. They play pranks, they plot, they steal and lie, they kill; but they aren't dummies, and one accepts the hereditary mania which, needless to say, is lust for gold. Somewhere hidden in the house there is a precious *magot*; everyone itches to lay his or her hands on it, and the atmosphere is a mixture of Renard and *Gianni Schicchi*. Grandpa, reprimanded for spitting on the floor, pleading for a glass of wine and a biscuit, dead with a rosary in his hands, revived and chaired up and down stairs by relatives who want to extort his secret, is the most remarkable character that I have seen in a film for a very long time; and the others are hardly less surprising and alive. An incalculable quirkish strain prevents this from being one of the dozen best French films, but it is not far below them.

The other two films were *Pontcarral*, the story of a patriot in the 1820's, splendidly produced and with a flavour of Lermontov, and a fairly amusing comedy of blackmail, *L'honorable Catharine*. I gather that *Goupi Mains Rouges* and *Pontcarral* at least will soon be released from the general ban applying to films made under the occupation.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

SEARCHLIGHT UNIT

The night, imperfectly concave,
Presses the shallow sun towards the sea,
Another day slips off beyond the western wave
Over time's edge, into obscurity.

The frost, strong-fingered, silent, slow,
Crumbles the clods around last summer's roots;
And silent too, beneath the early drifting snow,
The sleeping seedlings of next April's shoots.

The stream, its fringes touched with hoar,
Disturbs the pool that lies beyond the bridge;
It was like this that other winter, and before
We pitched our camp where Romans camped,
upon this ridge.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

Correspondence

YOUTH AND ILLITERACY

SIR,—The enclosed replies (see table below) were to questions asked in a neighbouring village. Your readers might be interested to have these placed against a reprint of the answers you published a fortnight ago from German prisoners. It was impossible to get the proper ages for comparison in wartime.

E. F. CARRITT

Oxford.

SIR,—I was interested to read "Physician's" reply to Heinrich Fraenkel's article in your journal of October 7, because, as a discussion group leader of mixed groups of adolescents in London, I can in some measure endorse his remarks. Whilst I should hesitate to agree with any suggestion of a general tendency towards hooliganism, brutality and promiscuity in modern youth, my experience leads me to agree with "Physician" that, in this country, "we have a mental vacuum culturally, ethically and politically." and that "there is every prerequisite in the next generation of the ideology we claim to oppose, except the ideology itself, and that, when the medium is favourable, is not hard to apply nor slow of acceptance."

In point of fact, among certain low-income groups—mostly those who have had elementary education, inadequate housing and "dead-end" or unsatisfactory jobs—that "favourable medium" already exists to-day. Amongst these groups I have found a complete lack of interest in anything except purely personal topics such as "What makes a girl attractive?" or "Marriage." Such subjects as "Russia," "What kind of London do we want?" and "Social Insurance" were far too highbrow—perhaps not surprising considering I had five illiterates in one group. But, even if interest was shown, then there was a surprising lack of concentration; in popular discussions on sex there would be a constant wandering in and out of roughly the same people. On top of this lack of interest and concentration I found a mass of prejudice. Amongst a group of fifty or so that passed through my hands in one place, I can only remember one who was not anti-semitic. Several times I have heard boys and girls say that the extermination of the Jews was "the best thing Hitler has done," that the Jews had all the money in this country, and that all M.P.s are Jews. Coupled with this hatred was that for the Americans.

As regards the Government of this country, I found an unbelievable amount of ignorance and prejudice. Anti-monarchism was surprisingly strong, as well as the belief that M.P.s are "fiddling" or making money out of the people of this country. Worse, to my mind, is the fact that many thought democratic government a farce, that it was "too slow," that "it has never done anything for us," and that it might be better to have "somebody that can get things done."

From my experience with other groups, I should say that, as the social scale is ascended, so interest increases and prejudice decreases—although anti-semitism seems widespread in all groups—and that the groups that I have mentioned above are small in number. This should not make us complacent, however, for such groups are created, as were the Nazis, from the seeds of ignorance, lack of thought and frustration, accentuated by the irrationalism of war. Another year at school and more secondary education will do much to reduce ignorance, but will it make youth think—and can we promise youth a future free from frustration in which they can form more stable values?

JOHN WEST

London, N.W.3.

Approx. Age	Status	Who was Shakespeare?	Who was last English King?	Greatest English Writer?	What happened in 1789?	Who was Beethoven?
50's	Stores Foreman	Poet	Edward VII.	Shaw	Don't know	Don't know
60's	Irish labourer	Don't know	Little man with a small beard*	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know
50's	Publican	Great writer	Edward?	Don't know	Don't know	Great singer
50's	Wife of Publican	Don't know	George V	Shakespeare	Don't know	Don't know
25	Mechanic	Poet	Edward VI	Shakespeare	Don't know	Musician
12½	Grammar School†	Poet and composer of plays	George V	Shakespeare	Don't know	Musician

* "I shook hands with him once when I was a jockey." † Son of a small farmer.

EXILED IN MAURITIUS

SIR,—Four years ago my husband sailed on s.s. *Patria* for Palestine, happy to have escaped from the Nazi hell in Vienna. Landing permission was, however, refused by the authorities and the ship was taken to the island of Mauritius, where all the unhappy Jewish refugees, including my husband, were interned. We, the next of kin of the internees, all hoped that this would be only a temporary measure until quota-space could be found for them in Palestine or somewhere else.

Four years have elapsed since and they are still there . . . forgotten by the authorities. My husband who is now 63 is still surviving in this tropical and malaria infested climate, but his hopes in humanity and justice are slowly diminishing, and he is sending me letters of desperation. I quote a short extract from his last letter. "We are afraid of the coming summer with its malaria and other tropical diseases and please try your utmost to impress upon the authorities about our misfortune, so that at least some of us shall be able to leave these prison walls alive. Four years have passed since our unbearable imprisonment, as helpless and innocent victims of senseless political machinations. Is there nobody of authority who will stop the decay of 1,400 men, women and children?"

Surely this state of affairs is not absolutely necessary at the present stage of the war, especially when these people's only offence is to have escaped the Nazi murder gangs.

It is indeed the irony of fate when Nazi prisoners of war can enjoy the healthy climates of Canada and the United States, while their "would-be victims" are rotting away in Mauritius.

M. TEITELBAUM

London, W.9.

SOLDIERS AND M.P.s

SIR,—From reading reports of debates in the House in two-months-old copies of the *Times* which find their way to Italy it appears that there has arisen in the Conservative Party a group which

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JONATHAN CAPE

takes part in every Service debate claiming to represent the fighting soldier with special reference to the men of the Eighth Army.

The motive of this group with a general election round the corner is, of course, crystal clear. The validity of the claim of the majority of these temporary officers is not so apparent. Most of these M.P.s are lawyers as well as Army officers, and by virtue of their qualifications they have been of more value to the country by engaging in staff duties instead of the line of battle. This, of course, is no reflection upon them personally, especially as, although they are all comparatively young, they are too old for the intense physical strain of modern warfare. I do not, however, think it right that a Member of Parliament solely by virtue of the fact that he is entitled to wear an officer's uniform is also entitled to clothe himself with the virtues of the fighting soldier in order to influence the electorate in his favour.

There are some members of this group who have seen active service in the line—notably Major Quintin Hogg. These members are, of course, fully entitled to represent the Service man. I am not suggesting that any member of this group is incongruously referred to in the House as "The Honourable and Gallant." I do think, however, that they bring credit either to their party or to themselves when they make use of the gallantry and agony of others to further their own ends with their constituents when the next General Election takes place. I, although I have served with the B.E.F., North Africa, and Italy on staff duties, do not consider myself either as a fighting soldier or as one worthy to identify himself with those whose blood and exertion have saved Britain and the world.

C.M.F. CANIS

FORCES VOTE IN INDIA

SIR,—My husband who is serving in India has written telling me of a most shocking anomaly that requires publicity in this country, all the more as it applies to men for whom an increase in pay, though welcome, can hardly compensate for the knowledge that Christmas will by no means see the beginning of the end for them, and who inevitably feel very isolated from home.

He writes: "The position is that many officers in the Indian Army (not British Army posted to India) are British subjects (i.e. normal residents in Great Britain) who came to India as rankers and were commissioned here. Theoretically they had the choice between the British and Indian Armies, but frequently practical difficulties tended to restrict their chances of getting British commissions and left them to make Hobson's choice of the Indian Army. Note that the regulations *allow* a free choice, but do not explain that British vote is forfeited by accepting an Indian Commission."

I hardly think that this needs any comment, except that surely whatever military job a resident of Great Britain takes on in wartime, it should not deprive him of his right to a say in determining the policy of his country.

KATHERINE WATSON

THE MANIFOLD VALLEY

SIR,—Proposals to create a reservoir and a cement works in the Manifold Valley, in Staffordshire, may completely change the aspect of one of England's most cherished possessions.

Earle's Cement Company intend to establish a large modern works which would be a great nuisance not only to the Manifold Valley, but equally to Dovedale and all the property owned by the National Trust in the neighbourhood, on Cauldon Low—a hill which once inspired a poem. The works will be similar to those in the Hope Valley whose chimneys and furnaces emit a constant stream of smoke and dust visible for miles around.

In fairness to the promoters, it should be said that they are doing this in order to produce much-needed cement for housing and industry. They are quite sincere when they declare that they do not wish to violate any beauty spot, but it is difficult to see how they can avoid doing irreparable damage. Though they have engaged a landscape artist to beautify these and other works by making lakes and planting trees, shrubs and grass, it will be impossible to hide the smoke and dust. It was to prevent such things as this that public spirited men bought and presented land in the neighbourhood to the National Trust.

The water scheme proposed by the Leicester Corporation is to take eleven thousand acres of good agricultural land for a reservoir in the upper reaches of the Manifold. Water from upper Dovedale is to be diverted into the reservoir and in exchange sewage from Longnor is to be piped into the Dove—the river of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. About 200 dairy farms will have to close, producing to-day sufficient milk for 40,000 people. In years to come, by improvements in farming, the affected parishes could supply Leicester with milk. Meanwhile, Leicester could take her water from other parts of the country with less disturbance.

Though thousands of people have found health and recreation in the valley, the numbers who have made it their health resort are small, compared with those who will do so after the war, as it is within half a day's journey of the industrial towns of the North. There is every reason to fear that these schemes may be the precursors of a general scramble for minerals and water that can only have evil consequences. Meanwhile, the opponents of the cement works and water schemes, now acting separately, should join forces.

Macclesfield. ARTHUR SMITH

TOURISM IN BRITAIN

SIR,—The statement in Mr. Charles Esam-Carter's letter in your issue of 7th instant that it is "the grossest superstition to suppose that, in the immediate post-war period, foreign tourists will bring us any benefit. Only when goods and services are in excess of demand can we afford to encourage people who consume without producing" is fallacious. Tourists from the U.S.A., Canada, etc., have to purchase the British currency they spend here by payment in dollars, which in turn give this country much-needed purchasing power over products from overseas.

A. EMIL DAVIES
London County Council.

TRIAL BY JURY

SIR,—As one who has served recently on a wartime "economy" jury of seven at the Old Bailey, I agree with Mr. Rolph's remarks in the main. The abolition of the jury system, convenient as it would be no doubt found by somebody who wanted to take advantage of us, is a step that must be fought by the common man in a Cromwellian spirit. The situation of the jurors at the Old Bailey is that we are the dwindling owners of "one man businesses" with a sprinkling of the excellent caretakers and residents of the City of London as the great industrial limited corporations get no representation.

The question of hardship financially did not affect me, as I had leave off from my Civil Defence duties with pay, and the whole proceedings only took up three days of my working time. If the present system of concealing a man's criminal record from the jury gives him a just expectation of mercy, I don't think the wretch can object to the jury being paid; and a State that squanders 4s. 6d. on a citizen whom it compels to stay at his office fire-watching in wartime could no doubt afford the like to a juryman.

C. J. SEARLE
6, Old Bailey, E.C.4.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

For four years little news percolated from France, eager though we were to catch every whisper. Sometimes one might see a copy of the *Figaro*, before it was suppressed, with an article in which Mauriac or Gide or Schlumberger revealed his hopes with ingenious courage; or a number of some Paris paper in which the exiguous crew of collaborators admitted that almost the whole intellect of France was ranged against them. Then there were the clandestine publications that men and women risked their lives to print and to distribute. And occasionally one had the chance to overwhelm with questions some Frenchman who had smuggled himself across the Pyrenees. Thus one obtained a broad picture (which turns out to have been pretty just) of the condition of French thought and art. But how many details were lacking! Now at last our isolation has ended. The Channel once more is a conjunctive, not an estranging sea. But the news we want is still rare, because the only English journalists in France are war correspondents, who very naturally think of Chartres as a road junction (and of Vercors as a plateau between Valence and Grenoble). They have done little to assuage our appetite. I think, therefore, that some information, scrappy though this is, collected from recent Paris papers will interest those who love things French—that is to say, almost everyone who cares seriously for literature and the other arts.

My facts come chiefly from *Lettres françaises*. This was started as a clandestine review printing the work of the resistant, and in its first openly published numbers it includes an absorbing history of its perilous outlaw past. Jacques Decours, who began it with Jean Paulhan, was caught and killed by the Germans; Claude Morgan then took up the work; soon others, like Edith Morgan, joined him. And so the paper grew. Now it publishes contributions by Mauriac, Duhamel, Aragon, Vercors, Eluard. Besides its own adventures it contains the equally exhilarating story of the *Editions de minuit*, which published clandestinely *Le silence de la mer* (and a second tale by Vercors); Mauriac's *Cahier noir*, the tribute to England by "Argonne" (whose real name is Debû-Bridel), and works by Maritain, Aragon, Benda, Cassou, Claude Aveline, and, in translation, Steinbeck. The real name of Vercors, it seems, is Bruller, and he was a book illustrator. (I was amazed to find a book of his on my shelves.) But he passed among his colleagues on the *Editions de minuit* under the name of Desvignes. Their publications were printed in the Boulevard de l'Hôpital by a M. Oudeville, who had a press for setting up those elaborate *lettres de faire-part* with which the French announce a death in the family. And so elegantly were they produced that a deluded journalist in Algiers thought they must be German propaganda in disguise. Can we here, with the best will in the world, effectively imagine what the strain of such clandestine activity must have been? Every time a bell rang it might announce the Gestapo and excruciating torture.

Lettres françaises contains a manifesto of French writers, ending "Dans la confrontation féconde des idées, jurons qu'elle retentira toujours, cette voix, aussi résolue et unanime que pendant l'épreuve." This is signed by intellectuals so various as Mauriac, Aragon, Duhamel, Eluard, Vildrac, Guéhenno, Benda, Roger Martin du Gard and Sartre.

Other features in *Lettres françaises* are tributes to Saint-Paul Roux, the old symbolist, and Max Jacob (painter and poet, Catholic and Jew,) both of whom died as victims of the Gestapo.

Then there is an article headed "Hommage à Pablo Picasso qui vécut toujours de la vie de la France," and a too brief account by André Lhôte of the present state of French painting. Though Picasso's work was not supposed to be shown, it could always be seen at one dealer's. Next we learn that Poulenc has composed a symphony on themes from Aragon's poems, and that he and Auric made clandestine recordings (in the German-controlled wireless station) of works by banned composers such as Milhaud and Schönberg, and of poems by resistant writers. Honegger wrote music for the production of Claudel's *Soulier de satin*. Claudel, whom I had the privilege of meeting last week, told me this was "perfect"; and, incidentally, he mentioned a poet whose name was new to me, Fombeure. Bourdet has, I understand, returned to the *Comédie française*, from which he resigned; and another dramatist, Salacrou, has now been made director of the Odéon.

From a B.B.C. French broadcast I learnt that Malraux's life during the occupation had been packed with such incidents as he described in *Les Conquérants* and *Espoir*. He is a colonel in the F.F.I., and was in charge of the Corrèze, the Dordogne and the Lot. (I was specially interested to hear this, for there is my favourite part of France, just as I was specially sad to learn that Mallarmé's house at Valvins had been destroyed.) He was responsible for widespread sabotage, and eventually captured some German tanks that he could use. Then he was wounded and captured and a prisoner in Toulouse. After a fantastic escape he is now fighting with the F.F.I. in the East of France. André Chamson, once a curator in the Palace of Versailles, was also in the *maquis*, with the responsibility of securing munitions and food.

Giraudoux, as we learnt with sorrow, is dead. Aragon maintains that he was poisoned by the Germans—"not only because he was the most French of our writers, but because he was actively resistant." Just before his death he had promised Aragon a book for the *Editions de minuit*. This is specially interesting because he had been accused of mild collaboration, and had, indeed, served as a Vichy official. There is no doubt that some of the most convinced resistants kept their work entirely secret and worked ostensibly with Vichy or even with the Germans, facing the opprobrium of their friends in order to be the more useful to the cause. The Tharauds, on the other hand, who also have been accused of collaborating, never concealed their sympathies, and are now writing in the revived *Figaro*. And Léon-Paul Fargue, who was also, it seems, under some suspicion, reveals that in 1942 he had the courage to propose the Jewish Max Jacob for the Académie Mallarmé.

Naturally *Lettres françaises* and the other Paris papers devote considerable space to the painful matter of the collaborators and call for their punishment. The Academy has forbidden its meetings to Abel Hermant and Abel Bonnard. Why, it is asked, has not Pétain been similarly disqualified? (Whether the Academy has the power to expel members is apparently a doubtful point of law.) A National Committee of Writers has published a list of those "whose attitude or writings under the occupation brought moral or material help to the oppressors." The Committee is composed of such eminently respectable figures as Duhamel and Vildrac, who can be trusted to be discriminating and unfanatical. The list is long, because it includes every wretched hack who sold his valueless pen to the enemy. Most of the known names on it come as no surprise—Abel Bonnard, Céline, Chardonne, Châteaubriant, Drieu la Rochelle, Fabre-Luce, Bernard Fay, Giono, Guitry, Hermant, Jouhandeau, Mauclair, Maurras, Montherlant, Morand, Recouly, Thérive, Vlaminck. And then there are a few best-sellers, like Henri Bordeaux, who must be senile, and Pierre Benoit. But how few, and for the most part how mediocre, are these writers compared with those who resisted! Montherlant I greatly admire—no living Frenchman writes a more crystalline prose, but one sees that this humourless immoralist, with his idolatry of physical strength, was doomed to collaborate. (He now, it seems, excuses himself on the ground that he is not a politician but only a writer and so "irresponsible"!) The most puzzling cases are those of Giono and Jouhandeau. I should have thought their integrity above suspicion and their ideas deeply anti-Nazi. Giono went to prison as a conscientious objector—how, then, could he champion the most hideous embodiment of militarism that has ever afflicted the earth? Yet there were other pacificists, disciples of Alain, who likewise supported the Germans. And Jouhandeau, a man tortured with hatred for everything vile? These are mysteries, of which we have not yet the key.

I do not know what fate is reserved for these traitors. For my part I hope that the contempt of their fellows will be held punishment enough. When we read history we deplore the execution of a Chénier, and applaud the indulgence shown to Milton. There is too little talent in the world—and too much hatred. Nevertheless, I think that we English should beware of raising shocked hands at such punishments as may be inflicted. Only those who have suffered like the French are entitled to intervene. We are apt here to be altogether too unimaginative. It is a national characteristic to turn a blind eye to what is unpleasant; even if our intellect acknowledges the truth of disgusting facts, our heart prefers to cherish its tranquillity. The Germans used the furthest refinements of torture upon women in the presence of their husbands to make these denounce their companions in resistance. How could a Frenchman endure meeting, much less give his support to, the tyrants responsible for such abominations? And that these particular Frenchmen had the honour to be intellectuals makes their case only worse. I do not for an instant suggest that we English should swell the cry for retribution. But we ought, I maintain, to avoid that pose of moral superiority to which we are so addicted, and to recognise that the French are entitled to clean their own country.

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

DR. SUN YAT-SEN AND DR. SUN FO

Strange Vigour. A biography of Sun Yat-Sen. By BERNARD MARTIN. *Heinemann*. 12*s*. 6*d*.

China Looks Forward. By SUN FO. *John Day*. $3.00.

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was the founder and first President of the Chinese Republic. Like other revolutionary leaders, he visited London during his period of exile. Yet no plaque records his life here, and it is only now, nearly twenty years after his death, that the story of his life has been published here in this exceptionally well-written and honest book. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was born in 1866 in a simple, though substantial, house made of mud plaster mixed with lime and rice-straw, in the village of Choyhung. As a small boy he protested against the practices of foot-binding and child slavery; his passion for education was satisfied in an English school in Honolulu, where he was also attracted by Christian doctrine, and in a medical school in Hongkong, where he formed a life-long friendship with his teacher Dr. Cantlie, whose courageous intervention in London in 1896 was to save him from execution; he took part in ten abortive risings and then in 1911 was the inspiration of the revolution which overthrew the Manchus who had tried to kill him. So far the story follows a not uncommon pattern of revolutionary life. But the story takes a novel turn because when Dr. Sun Yat-Sen realised that the revolution had been betrayed by Yuan Shih-kai he again went into exile and set about the reorganisation of the Kuomintang. He became head of a Southern Government formed in Canton in August, 1917, but died in 1925 before North and South were united in a single Government.

As an independent biographer Mr. Martin is not handicapped by the memories which confuse some other writers, who were personally involved in decisive moments of the Chinese revolution, and whose judgment is coloured by their need for self-justification. Take, for example, Mr. Martin's candid account of British relations with Yuan Shih-kai, whose disastrous career as President would scarcely have been possible without British financial and diplomatic support. Yuan Shih-kai was a wily opportunist who played off the North

against the South, the Manchus against the revolutionaries. Above all, he was prepared to barter China's salt taxes for a loan from the Banking Consortium on terms which President Wilson described as touching "very nearly the administrative independence of China itself," thus causing the American group of bankers to withdraw. The British did not follow this correct attitude of America, and Yuan obtained his "obnoxious loan" through the Hongkong and Shanghai Corporation at Peking. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen denounced it in a cable to his old friend Dr. (by now Sir James) Cantlie. "If Peking Government," he cabled, "is kept without funds there is prospect of compromise between it and people being effected, while immediate effect of liberal supply of money will probably be precipitation of terrible and disastrous conflict. In name and for sake of humanity, which civilisation holds sacred, I therefore appeal to you to exert your influence with view to preventing bankers from providing Peking Government with funds which at this juncture will assuredly be used as sinews of war." Dr. Cantlie did everything he could, but the daily press was solid in backing Yuan, "possibly because of the contrary influence of Yuan's adviser, Dr. G. E. Morrison of *The Times*." The loan went through and Yuan Shih-kai broke China's first attempt at democratic government with the help of British finance. This incident, which is so often glossed over by experts who were in China at the time, goes a long way to explain why modern China makes such differentiation between British and American policy. Just before he died, Dr. Morrison asked Sir James Cantlie to visit him. "If I had appreciated," he said, "the character of Sun Yat-Sen years ago as I do now the history of China would have been different, and I would like you to make that known." A handsome tribute to Dr. Sun, and a very honest gesture on the part of the man whose "position as adviser to the 'recognised' Peking Government, and his connection with the *Times*, gave him great influence which he used to alienate British sympathy from Sun and his cause."

Mr. Martin gives a balanced account of Dr. Sun's relations with Russia. Dr. Sun was a Chinese nationalist and not a Communist. But he appreciated the vast achievements of the Soviet Union, and believed that by a planned economy China, freed from foreign domination, might achieve similar results in the course of twenty years. He hoped, too, "that the day will soon come when the U.S.S.R. will welcome a friend and ally in a mighty, free China, and that in the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world both those allies will go forward to victory hand in hand."

This same theme often recurs in the speeches of Dr. Sun Fo (the son of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen), who is now President of the Legislative Yuan of China and one of the most constructive and outspoken critics of the present dictatorship of the Kuomintang. *China Looks Forward* is a valuable collection of his speeches and articles since 1940. The first one, entitled "Sun Yat-Sen and Soviet Russia," draws important distinctions between the history of the Chinese and Russian revolutions; it contrasts Russia's "unimpaired sovereignty" and China's "semi-colonial status," which has forced her to concentrate on national emancipation, and directed her attention to the internal need of abolishing class rule and of developing her resources and improving the abysmal standard of living of her huge population. In other lectures, he stresses, as his father did in the later years of his life, that it was natural that San-Min-Chu-I (Three People's Principles) "would be opposed first and foremost to imperialism," since imperialism would resist the transformation of China from an agricultural to a balanced economy on which her future depended. Dr. Sun Fo sees in the Japanese invasion the "last desperate effort made by world imperialism, as a system, to check the victory of San-Min-Chu-I in China." The problem of national freedom, he told the Political and Party Affairs Section of the Central Training Institute in Chungking (February, 1944) "will be solved completely upon the victorious conclusion of this war." This means, he suggests, changes in present "machinery and practice" of the Kuomintang and the Chungking Government, which "have turned in a wrong direction, inconsistent with the Party Constitution drafted by Dr Sun Yat-Sen in 1923 and contrary to the spirit of democracy." . . ." It is less than 1 per cent. of the Chinese population. . . . But we have come to regard ourselves as if we were the sovereign Power entitled to the enjoyment of a special position and to the suppression of all criticism whatsoever against us." He then suggests the revision of procedure and the development of local government based on democratic election. "Only through democratic politics and planned economy can China secure her bright future." To the San-Min-Chu-I Youth Corps he speaks in similar language. To clean out corruption and oppression from the village and local administrations, and to introduce genuine local self-government, should be their aim.

Again, when dealing in the last section of this book with China's foreign policy, the peace settlement with Japan and post-war reconstruction, his political concepts and his economic proposals are an up-to-date version of his father's "Three Principles." He fully realises how long and how difficult will be China's struggle for freedom, and the moral that emerges both from his book and from Mr. Bernard Martin's excellent biography of his father is that China's allies will meet with a democratic response in China, if they are themselves willing to co-operate with her on equal terms.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

NEW NOVELS

The Friendly Young Ladies. By MARY RENAULT. *Longmans.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Power House. By ALEX COMFORT. *Routledge.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Wild River. By ANNA LOUISE STRONG. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

So Immortal a Flower. By CECIL ROBERTS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

"Mrs. Wix gave a sidelong look. She still had room for wonder at what Maisie knew."

It is what Maisie doesn't know that may present difficulties to a novelist writing about childhood's contacts with maturity. Simple awakening to the shabbiness of humanity is one thing; and it is not difficult perhaps for a writer to make childhood only a prelude to a larger action. But what if the child is to remain a child, surrounded by adults, for as long as one is allowed to see? Henry James, scenting an attractive problem, surrounds his Maisie with a nightmarishly complicated adult world, but tells us about it only from the child's point of view; or, as he prefers to say: "The one presented register of the whole complexity would be the play of the child's confused and obscure notation of it." Miss Elizabeth Bowen, in *The Death of the Heart*, has a different approach. She presents a child whose heart is to die, and surrounds her with adults whose hearts have already passed through that stage. But though Portia, the child, stays always in the reader's mind, she is often out of sight, and the grown-ups are drawn with equally intense concentration. It is Miss Bowen's remarkable accomplishment that she can write about her two worlds, the breaking world of childhood and the broken world of maturity, with consistent penetration.

In *The Friendly Young Ladies*, Miss Renault attempts both problems. She uses the technique of the "point of view," and gives us that of the adults as well. When the point of view is that of the girl, Elsie, she is wholly and admirably successful. The opening chapters in Cornwall are amusing, sensitive and well written; the ridiculous middle-class parents and the atmosphere of the middle-class home are perfect. In Elsie's family there is a skeleton, tightly cupboarded: years earlier Elsie's sister, Leonora, has run away. Liberally over-interpreting the advice of a young doctor acting as a *locum tenens* in the neighbourhood, Elsie runs away and joins her sister. As soon as Elsie gets into the world of the friendly young ladies, Miss Renault's troubles begin. Thenceforward, whenever things are seen from Elsie's angle, the book is lively and real; her misunderstanding of the personal relationships around her is well done, and so are the few later actions to which her author commits her, including the final one. Unfortunately, a fog descends whenever Miss Renault tries to get inside her grown-ups, and a most promising book gets lost. The book aims at depths which are impenetrable because Miss Renault has ignored the preliminary necessities of organisation on the surface. It is a real lack of invention that makes Leonora and Joe seem so unreal and so nebulously conceived: both have pasts which are left too much to conjecture for their pressure on the present to be comprehensible to the reader; and the love scenes between these and other characters which mark the progress of such story as there is do not bring the characters any more clearly before us. One cannot even tell precisely *how* friendly the young ladies have been to each other. Miss Renault is at the difficult stage of being able to express subtle thoughts and truths about personality without being able always to attach them to personalities whom they fit; but she is a very able writer, and her younger heroine alone makes her book worth reading.

Mr. Comfort opens his new novel with a detailed description of a power house, and after that he goes on to describe, in even greater detail, an abattoir. Against these backgrounds he disposes his characters, with all of whom, he tells us in a note, he has been personally acquainted. Yet they are strikingly like characters from many another book, including a famous burlesque. The old uncle with his "remarkably deformed body"; the mother whose obliging habit it is to move from her bed to another one in the same room in order that her daughter may occupy the first with a lover; the little boy who wears as a girdle an ox's tail procured from the slaughterhouse ("it was beginning to smell already"); the inhibited, ashamed young man; the uninhibited, unashamed young women: they have been here before.

The things Mr. Comfort deals with are real; some people have based their faith or scepticism on a contemplation of them. In Mr. Comfort they have compelled neither; he writes as if he had no feeling, and his cold, monotonous flatness is not a form of objectivity. His people and scenes are merely a miscellany of conventional literary matter, fashionable things to put inside a sophisticated book. He is not confronted with an inferno; he is simply on to a good thing. The deaths on the driving-belt, the casual deaths of infants in the docks, the wretched seductions in the deserted sheds; they are all good material, to be drawn out, when required, as from a card-index of misery. The cooler the bravado they are served up with, the better. One's conscience is stirred, not with Mr. Comfort, but against him.

One's hostility deepens as he passes on from the world of industrial exploitation to his later scenes, which include the invasion of France by the Germans, and the days of occupation. Here he has to rely on the accounts of others, for he does not appear to have been in the Battle of France himself. This does not deter him; nor is there any very cogent reason why it should, though a less glib writer might have considered a decade or so of thought to be a useful preliminary to such a task. Mr. Comfort chooses to rely on his imagination, which is not powerful enough to bring to life and to illuminate the data he has collected. Much of the result is a lifeless *collage*. Panic, horror, despair: one might expect a sense of all these things. None of them is there. All one gets is an occasional shock.

The outward signs of second-handedness are many. Mr. Comfort is uncertain of his material, and he has to strive for visual effects to help him

towards vividness. Hence he particularises everything that appears, whether this is necessary or not; there is even a "large, toffee-coloured 'cello" at one point. And when adjectives seem to offer no help, he relies on similes, employing at times up to four or five a page. If people emerge from the darkness, they must emerge like rabbits from a hole; if ivy hangs from a building, it has to look like tar falling from a pot; the banal simile, the far-fetched simile, the absent-minded simile, the approximative simile ("like a sort of"), are here in overpowering proliferation; all kinds of simile, in fact, except the rare ones which render things more striking.

Not nearly enough care seems to have gone to the making of this book. The only way, perhaps, for such a jumble of observation and hearsay to cohere into a work of art would be the impregnation of it with a vision and a philosophy. According to the blurb the book has these things: "out of it all emerges a social philosophy as unconventional as it is profound." Where? All one can detect in this way is one character or another saying from time to time that this is a lunatic age, an age in which the humbugs are fighting the thugs. There is nothing very unconventional about this point of view, though it is rather unusual to get stuck there. As a philosophy it is supercilious rather than profound.

Wild River is a simple tale about the early farm settlements in the Soviet Ukraine and the building of the Dnieper dam. It would be easy to poke fun at a book which falls open at an All-Union Congress, where the heroine is in solemn conversation with Comrade Stalin:

> "How many acres does your farm assign to its sugar-beet?" asked Stalin.
>
> "Two hundred and fifty last year," replied Anya. "This year we'll manage to get more."
>
> "Does that satisfy you?" Stalin's words came slowly. "Three hundred acres for sugar-beets . . . is that enough?"
>
> What did he mean, Anya wondered. Then she felt his eyes appraising her, encouraging her, as if he wanted the most of which she was capable. She knew what she wanted now.

Yet the book, though inconsiderable as a novel, has a good many things in it which we ought to know. Dams, collective farms, factory cities are dull enough to think and read about perhaps, but when we conventionally admire the Russian people for the scorching of their earth, it is worth while attempting to realise what a prodigious and heart-breaking amount of destruction this meant. The Dnieper dam—a good deal of the work on which had been done by volunteers who gave their own spare time alternately to this and to fighting their own analphabeticism—was meant to last a thousand years; it was destroyed after ten. It is particularly good to be reminded at this moment of Russia's achievements and sacrifices; for we may soon enough see them belittled.

So Immortal a Flower is a wonderful, luscious pudding of clichés. Armadas appear in the skies, bombs rain down, fighters roar up; afternoons are charged with the scent of flowers, the sun sets in a crimson conflagration. A generous and warm-hearted book; two books, in fact, hitched together with none of that absurd cunning which some mistake for art. The first opens in 1923 in Tunis, where a young gentleman, Randell Dunning, is resting after a trip in the desert. He is a high-brow young novelist, and "the critics" have already spoken of his "nervous prose." There is nothing nervous about that of Mr. Roberts:

> Three months in the desert, with lice-infested Arabs and hide-strong camels, had pressed heavily upon his sensitive nature, and a forced continence had severely tried the flesh through the heat of sub-tropical days and a provocative imagination stirred by the lovely starlit nights. A thirst had been stored pending the return to human contacts, and his turbulent blood worked in him for the fulfilment of manhood.

Observing this, a beautiful Austrian countess, Carlotta von Kleber, invites him to become her lover. She has "high-arched feet, unsplayed and vital." She is not really in love with Randell, but she wants a baby, and her husband is unable to provide her with one. The baby is born, and turns up, nearly two hundred pages later, as a Nazi in the Battle of Crete. The battle itself is excitingly described, and most of the characters die in it; but for his second heroine and one of his many heroes Mr. Roberts does manage to provide as happy an ending as can reasonably be contrived in wartime, short of permanently disabling them.

HENRY REED

DUTCH-AMERICAN

With a Dutch Accent. By DAVID CORNELL DEJONG. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

"It is our practice," announces the blurb, "to attempt, on the jacket, some description of an autobiography, but to issue our novels without such advertisement. This is an autobiography, but we are attempting no description; for to convey the essential quality of its charm seems to us almost impossible." Thus, introducing a new autobiography, the house of Gollancz. One way of making a song and dance; but, in fact, *With a Dutch Accent* isn't so indescribable. The charm lies in the author's unrest and self-suppression, in a memory that proliferates rather than refines. Two-thirds of the book describes his childhood and boyhood in Holland, and in the last third the scene shifts to America, where he begins to emerge with a change of nationality. The theme is not so much personal or even family history as this exchange of worlds, the old and the new, both constricting to the individual. A quotation from *Duino Elegies* heads the first chapter, and between that and the crabbed Calvinist boyhood that follows we may scent a greater distance than that which separates the Holland and America of the book. The author has grown up since (how, exactly, one doesn't know), and this gives a pulse to his descriptions of places and people.

The great green dike at Wierum, dividing the sea from the patterned inland waters, towers like a road through eternity, yet most of the old town had disappeared under the sea's ravages.

> There it happened that within four days my brother was born, and the sea came over the dike, so that Father had to carry us to safety through swirling, gurgling water in the deep of the night, while the church bell tolled relentlessly. It all seemed to happen so casually that I simply accepted it as one of the natural phenomena of the old town, which already was so full of widows and orphans, and in which people seemed so much concerned with death.
>
> That night several people were drowned, and one street was swept entirely into the canal. The dike had come perilously close to breaking through, and that would have been the end of all of us. We couldn't forsee that it would never happen again as long as we lived in Wierum. The next morning, clinging to Father's hand, I looked at the ruined houses, the jagged, gaping holes in the sea side of the dike—in which old human skeletons lay row upon row—the wrecked fishing sloops and the heaps of bloated drowned sheep upon the dike. Already a group of anthropologists were measuring the extraordinarily large skulls of the old human skeletons, to determine what bygone race they represented—naturally, to the great indignation of the fisherfolk. I asked Father: "But why do people keep living here?" He said: "Because they've lived here for centuries and centuries." Centuries sounded like eternities; the answer was sufficient.

That is a good sample of Mr. DeJong's narrative skill, and it gives the background against which life was lived: old Frisian customs, the wild fisherfolk, poverty, drink, intermarriage, skating days, five visits to church on Sunday: a

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queer mixture of pagan pleasures and harsh Christianity. Nothing could be more delightful than the anticipation, late one January, of the ice hardening, of the sunlit morning when whole families would set out on the canals, serious and excited, with their hands clasped behind their backs and sandwiches in their pockets. To have weak ankles—that would seem the only unhappiness of childhood. But then the children were forbidden stories they would have loved; *Tom Sawyer* was snatched away, *Oliver Twist* declared to be "unchristian reading matter"; and only in poring over geography books did the youthful DeJong find an outlet for imagination. This during periods of illness, when the doctor would shake his head hopelessly. "It is better not to dwell too much on those months." comments the self-denying Mr. DeJong, though no doubt they were formative.

There is a curious impartiality in his feelings towards others; not that he doesn't feel, but the reader is admitted only so far in confidence; we know the doctor (whose car can be heard back-firing two miles off) as much, and as little, as those closer in family or school. There are life-like snapshots of a number of people, from the deaf-mute uncle who is denied his dream of union with a girl similarly afflicted, to prim aunts on bicycles, and fault-finding authorities. Nothing seems to have escaped Mr. DeJong's sharp eyes, and we are constantly surprised by being reminded that this child in the corner of the scene is only five or seven.

When the family move to America, on which so many hopes have been based, it is to renew the struggle against poverty in a convention-ridden Dutch community. Acclimatisation is hard; and the book ends with adolescence and a dawning sense of release. The story, no doubt, will be continued. As it is, America provides the contrast of new experience, from which we may look back to the dark, painful, enchanted years of childhood.

G. W. STONIER

THE LAND GIRL

The Women's Land Army. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. *Michael Joseph.* 5s.

Miss Sackville-West has told the story of the Women's Land Army, its organisation and achievement. Her wide survey is published "under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture,' and doubtless this means that it was commissioned by the Ministry, and undertaken by its distinguished author as a duty. She paints her picture in less than ninety pages with free use of *couleur de rose*. Story told, or picture painted, we find a number of interesting appendices followed by more than fifty photographs of land girls doing varied jobs with uniform signs of enjoyment, just as though our English winter did not demand five months out of every year. It is not possible to read the text carefully without realising that the author has expert knowledge, broad views and wide sympathies, though she has surrendered to the noble pleasure of praising. Those who join the Land Army in the belief that her persuasive pen has meted out even treatment to the pros and cons of their work, may be a little disappointed.

Writing as one who employed women on farm work before the late and lamented Lord Ernle went to the Board of Agriculture, I say without hesitation that only the most robust women should undertake certain forms of hard labour now given to one and all. Tractor driving, ploughing and loading whether manure or potatoes, are not for the many; they carry out such jobs at their risk and peril. Speaking generally, the supervision of the W.L.A. is and must remain inadequate; being a member of a voluntary organisation, the land girl is beyond discipline. Should she elect to be lazy and unpunctual it is her business. Good work is a matter for the individual conscience, and because of our high national standard, the Land Army has accomplished great deeds, saved difficult situations and faced dangers with fine courage.

Before the war that was to end war, I employed women to look after livestock because they handled them gently; I had tired of the men who, as T. E. Dunville used to sing, "coaxed 'em with a hob-nailed boot." Over a period of years I had nearly a dozen women helpers. A few tired, others started out on their own account, and the rest committed matrimony; all were helpful.

I recall one pleasant little Cockney so loquacious that she would talk to herself rather than give her tongue time off. One afternoon in the season when fields are dank and ways are mire, she passed me on the other side of a hedge. I don't know what her work was just then, but heard her say: "this is a muckin' job; let's go 'ome"; and on the following morning she said to me "I chucked it four o'clock yesterday, governor, fed up." I decline to believe the story of a newcomer who, having said she could milk, was given a stool and sent to a Jersey cow very easy to handle, and returned hot and bothered to say she had taken the stool to the cow, but couldn't persuade the plaguey little beast to sit down.

Last year I had a dozen Land Army girls working in a wood, their job to cut and trim larches. Two, billeted on us, were fine types of conscientious worker who started out fresh and came home tired out. When I walked through the wood these two would be intent on their job. Two or three of their company would be engaged in looking on, while others moved at paces a snail must have envied. But they did not lack energy; they built some steps, still standing, to ease the ascent for men from the searchlight station in the meadow below, who came along to lighten labours with a chat. "Male and female created He them."

The service of the W.L.A. is not yet efficient. Miss Sackville-West talks of the splendid effort of those who destroy vermin. Suffering badly from field mice, I applied to our County Committee, and it offered to clear them for one pound. I signed a contract, and the Committee sent a pleasant young woman. She came, she saw and the "mouse" conquered. As a result of the first poisoning one field mouse was picked up but clearly it was not the culprit. A textbook won't teach you to destroy vermin. Herein lies food for reflection.

S. L. B.

NEW PAMPHLETS

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY. *Macmillan.* 5s.

The autumn issue of this quarterly is devoted entirely to the future of the Universities. John MacMurray discusses the unction of a university; Sir Ernest Simon deals with the differences in the number of students in British and American colleges; and Sir W. L. Bragg writes on the organisation and finance of science in our universities. Other contributors include G. D. H. Cole and Bonamy Dobrée. An excellent contribution to the various proposals for university reform.

HOW TO DEAL WITH GERMANY. By Sir WALTER LAYTON. *News Chronicle.* 6d.

A reprint, with additional material, of the series of careful and stimulating articles which recently appeared in the *News Chronicle*. This pamphlet provides a valuable basis for discussing this controversial problem.

THE WAR, THE PEACE AND GERMANY. *Union of Democratic Control*, 34 Victoria Street, S.W.1. 2d.

A valuable statement of the essentials of Allied policy towards Germany which sets out a minimum programme by which conditions for the rebuilding of German democracy can take place.

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10.106

Week-end Competition

No. 767

Set by William Whitebait

The usual prizes are offered for remarks or conversations overheard in cinemas.

Limit 200 words. Entries must be received by October 23rd.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 764

Set by Roger Marvell

The rumour goes that prominent Nazis are now in the hands of the plastic surgeons, who are making them unrecognisable. Competitors are invited to submit not more than 20 lines of verse in the manner of Browning, describing the appearance and conduct of a colony of such personages after the war.

Report by Roger Marvell

Nazi leaders passing for cultivated old Rabbis and uttering anti-Semitic filth—the grotesqueness of such a situation seemed to me to call for the author of *Holy-Cross Day*. Among the best of many good entries were those of Pibwob, Ronald Mason, M. Cameron, Willy Tadpole, James A. Scott, Little Billie, Joyce M. Gooby, R. S. Jaffray, Redling, Ivy Turnbull, John Antony, Corton King. Two guineas are divided between L. E. J. and R. J. P. Hewison, and the rest of the prize money between Towanbucket, Imalech and L. A. Redford.

What, three Herren Schmidts? You mock me,
Gentle-pigs;
Your snout, Sir—did it never sniff out rags
In Ghetto garbage heaps, or snuffle tears
For pogroms?—With that instep-arch it has
(A thought too greasy on sirocco nights)?
Why, you out-Schnozzle Schnozzle! There's the hand
Of Grinling-Gillies, rolling up his sleeve,
See with what care he slits, now upwards, so!
Now sideways, lays the flap back, plugs the veins
(No pop-off Blackbird he) and with a flick
Un-Schickelgrübers Schickelgrüber-Schmidt!
And you, Sir Paunch-Schmidt, did you hear the slap,
Like dab on slab, when that gross life of yours
Was sliced and flung upon the paving-stones?
Flap!—and the wolf-teeth grinned from bloody gums!
But here's more delicate work: a flaxen scalp
(Was God not looking?) that some tender girl
Yielded to Joseph Schmidt. . . .
Come pur, Come pur,
To your mingle-mangle! there repristinate
Hell's days pot-kettle-potting—grr, you swine!

L. E. J.

THE FLIGHT OF THE BUTCHERS

Here, Senhor, this is the colony, these are the inmates,
All refugees, they aver, from Nazi oppression.
Women? Not one she among 'em—such creatures don't win mates.
There—saw you ever such travesty—nature-transgression?
Mark me yon swagbellied Hebrew, this fleshpot, this Arbuckle.
Curved the proboscis, the visage so oily to grease it he
Daily is thought. To just hoist him abed needs a parbuckle.
Manner obsequious, bland: yet for all his obesity
Something ferocious, barbaric, shows through.
Then this manikin
Clubfoot, wry-shouldered, with roses and milk for complexion,
Faced like an innocent child—'tis but paint on the cannikin
Inwardly harbouring gall, venom, filth and infection.
See this divine—such he seems at first sighting—bespectacled,
Grave (yet a touch o' the ferret, so close are the eyes?) sable
Garments against which, shave beard, the parsonical neck-tackle'd
Gleam like the snow.
Some skulk, scarred, as men scarce recognisable,
Wall-scribes—see this (of what dire operation significant?)
Graffito, "Saved from the axe by the knife." Their behaviour,
Features, distorted, athwart—had they fared better if—I can't
Quell the grim thought—from the knife had the axe been their saviour?

R. J. P. Hewison

PARTY IN A BAR PARLOUR

A journeyman painter he is, you say,
With the auburn dye in his tortured hair?
A Napoleon soul, or I miss my way
In his slanting eyes with the pale, wild glare,
And the finger at scratch on a lip too bare.
And here's a sad Falstaff, no longer stout,
With the face of a saint, to bring me wine:
He's a saint? Well, the matter admits of doubt,
For a virtue on show is a hint malign
Of a vice masquerading in guise divine.
And this seasoned lad who hop-skips with a limp?
A potboy? The devil on sticks, indeed!
Who has flattened his nose till he seems a chimp?
And widened his eye from a tiny black bead,
Yet left all too clear that expression of greed?
Now the landlord himself, with black-avised grin:
Pay the score: have done, and let us be off!
An oily old Boniface, lacking a chin:
How he reeks of stale garlic, to make one cough!
The look of a bully—and is, like enough!

Towanbucket

What, Sirs, not know these lickspits o' the island?
Nay, but you shall, now. Mark me that pantaloon,
That fat-chap's lump with lip-hair still unbrushed
O' crumbs—you know the club type—all agape
With vacuous monocle and *Times*; see, where he struts
Mouthing an oath as who should play the man,
Preening his tomfool tawdry—note at his heels
That tow-haired beardless choirman, eyes upturned,
Humming a descant; grrr! that dandiprat,
That quondam oracle, candle-end of cleverness,
Baying the moon with lies. You know them? Well.
But see this swart Levantine, trundling his ordure,
Sniffing with 's nose; this man bethought himself
To rule the roost—'tis true, Sirs—look where he goes
A shekel grubber, plaguy maundering Jew,
A cur his only caudatory, and his world
His dung cart. These are the men we keep for show,
All mad, all hated. Come, Sirs, you'll dine with me?
We'll have them dance for us anon.

Imalech

THE DOCTOR SHOWS HIS CASES IN PRAXED ASYLUM

——Some of my patients, sir.——That taliped——
A queer case—looks so bland and coy, yet writes,
Ream after ream, such vile pornography
You never saw. 'Ware, too, the placid mien
Of him, the only fat one. (See his rings,
Four to each finger?) Scent, and women's clothes,
He's fond of. (Yes, Narcissism purely.)——Now,
That pale myopic one's a Sadist—worse—
It's well the pot he aimed to brain me with
Was rubber, to prevent such dastardy!
——Oh, him? Indeed, psychic affinity
May link them all. *You'd* argue further, pierce
Beyond the imagined self of him, to find
A real identity with—Adolf? Why,
He's new—Napoleon Complex up to date,
That's all he's got! Clear Paranoiac!
He's harmless, but complains much, and he writes
Some *magnum opus*. Placate, and thwart him not!
Cross him, he'll scream and rant and gnaw in lumps
Our corridors' hygienic lino—thus!

L. A. Redford

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WANTED, unfurn. flat or maisonette, 20 mins. Oxford Circus, 4 rms., kitchen, bathroom. Large sit.-rm. essent. Might exchange small flat, Fitzroy Sq. Box 5844.

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FOR SALE: 3-point Ascot water heater; Canteen gas hot plate; Beacon 3-column gas radiator; Bungalow gas cooker; Officer's Army Great-coat, never worn, chest 36in., Height 5ft. 10in., 8 *gns.* offer; Ice skates-boots, size 5½; Wireless, 5-valve E.M.G. set, A.C. mains, perfect order, £22; Haydn Quartet Society, 8 vols., 57 records, fibre played, complete set only; H.M.V. Automatic record-changing pick-up, perfect condition; German Linguaphone, offers; Burke (6 vols.); "Illustration Noel," 20 vols., 1920–1939, bound, offers; Records symphony, concerto, also player, £20.

WANTED: Small second-hand car, any make, not over £50, London; Fitted cocktail cabinet; Sectional bookcase; Small radio; Leather suitcase; Brief-case; Portable typewriter; Ice-axe (exchange short fly-rod or cash); 2 Rucksacks; Portable typewriter (for Editor Forces Newspaper), reasonable; Treble recorder; New Yorker; Nonesuch Shakespeare, Quixote, Rousseau, Harvey, please price; Sinclair Lewis, "It Can't Happen Here," Koestler "Darkness at Noon" (to replace lost books in Public Library).

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Company Meeting

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POST-WAR PROBLEMS

THE 53rd annual general meeting of Furness, Withy and Co., Limited, was held on October 10th in London.

Mr. Ernest H. Murrant, M.B.E., who presided, said that the net profit for the year was £540,668. From that they had paid the usual half-yearly dividends on the Preference share capital, transferred £300,000 to depreciation, and transferred £9,551 to fleet replacement account.

With regard to post-war problems his personal opinion was that there were many grounds for gratification in the sound policy followed by the Minister of War Transport and his advisers. In detail, however, shipowners had much to be dissatisfied with, but in general many of the evils which had arisen out of the first world war had been avoided. Both the Government and shipowners would shortly find it necessary to deal with post-war problems. The Government was committed to recognise the necessity of maintaining the British mercantile marine in adequate strength and in a position of full competitive efficiency.

The shipowners' problem would be to restore their fleets. They would be faced with competition which would arise from the fact that there might possibly be more tonnage afloat at the end of the war than at its commencement, although very differently distributed and very largely of emergency utility types, and with it all they would be required to earn a reasonable return upon the invested capital. There was no reason to doubt that the Government would realise the facts of the situation.

The report was adopted.

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